

3-1-2010

Homeless Rehabilitation Center at LaSalette Shrine in Attleboro, MA

Reid Evan Ennis

Roger Williams University, rennis938@g.rwu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://docs.rwu.edu/archthese>



Part of the [Architecture Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ennis, Reid Evan, "Homeless Rehabilitation Center at LaSalette Shrine in Attleboro, MA" (2010). *Architecture Theses*. Paper 42.
<http://docs.rwu.edu/archthese/42>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation Theses at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Architecture Theses by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact mwu@rwu.edu.



HOMELESS REHABILITATION CENTER AT LASALETTE SHRINE IN ATTLEBORO, MA

REID EVAN ENNIS

PROFESSOR HASAN-UDDIN KHAN

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, ART AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ARCHITECTURE

FALL 2009

HOMELESS REHABILITATION CENTER AT LASALETTE SHRINE IN ATTLEBORO, MA

AUTHOR: REID EVAN ENNIS

SIGNATURE_____

DATE_____

ADVISOR: HASAN-UDDIN KHAN

SIGNATURE_____

DATE_____

DEAN: STEPHEN WHITE

SIGNATURE_____

DATE_____

Abstract	6
Problem Statement	8
Project Statement	18
Program	22
Site Analysis	28
Precedents	44
Climate Data	60
Conceptual Sketches	68
Final Project	76
Bibliography	92

ABSTRACT

6



Architecture has the power to help alleviate problems in society. However, it is not enough to simply design and build a structure and assume the problem will be solved. The people who use the building must be committed to solving the problem and must actively use the building to the full potential it was designed for.

Homelessness is, without a doubt, one of the most important and obstinate social issues of our time. There are many continuing attempts to end homelessness which have been met with varying degrees of success. I feel it is critical to promote dignity and self-worth for the underprivileged, while they are encouraged to create a better life for themselves. It will never be enough to simply ignore a problem, or conversely, to blindly throw money at it without a thought out strategy. My proposal will help to alleviate some of the suffering endured by some people who have had very difficult lives.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

8



The city of Providence is currently undergoing an urban revitalization project which involves re-routing parts of routes 95 and 195. The project will, in effect, enlarge the downtown area by recovering neighborhoods cut off by the 195 split. While this is certainly beneficial for the growth of the city it also serves the public good by bringing to light the deplorable state in which the homeless live in the city. As the old 195 bridge and various overpasses are being demolished, the city became aware that these structures provided shelter for about 80 homeless people, living in a squatter settlement, dubbed "Hope City". For the project to go forward and for their own safety, these squatters need to be relocated. However, there is a better solution to simply pushing these people either somewhere else in the city or out into the surrounding towns of Rhode Island. The solution is to go to the root of the problem and look into educating and providing a dignified means of recovery for the homeless people of the city.



Tents located under an exit ramp of 195. Point Street Bridge visible in background.



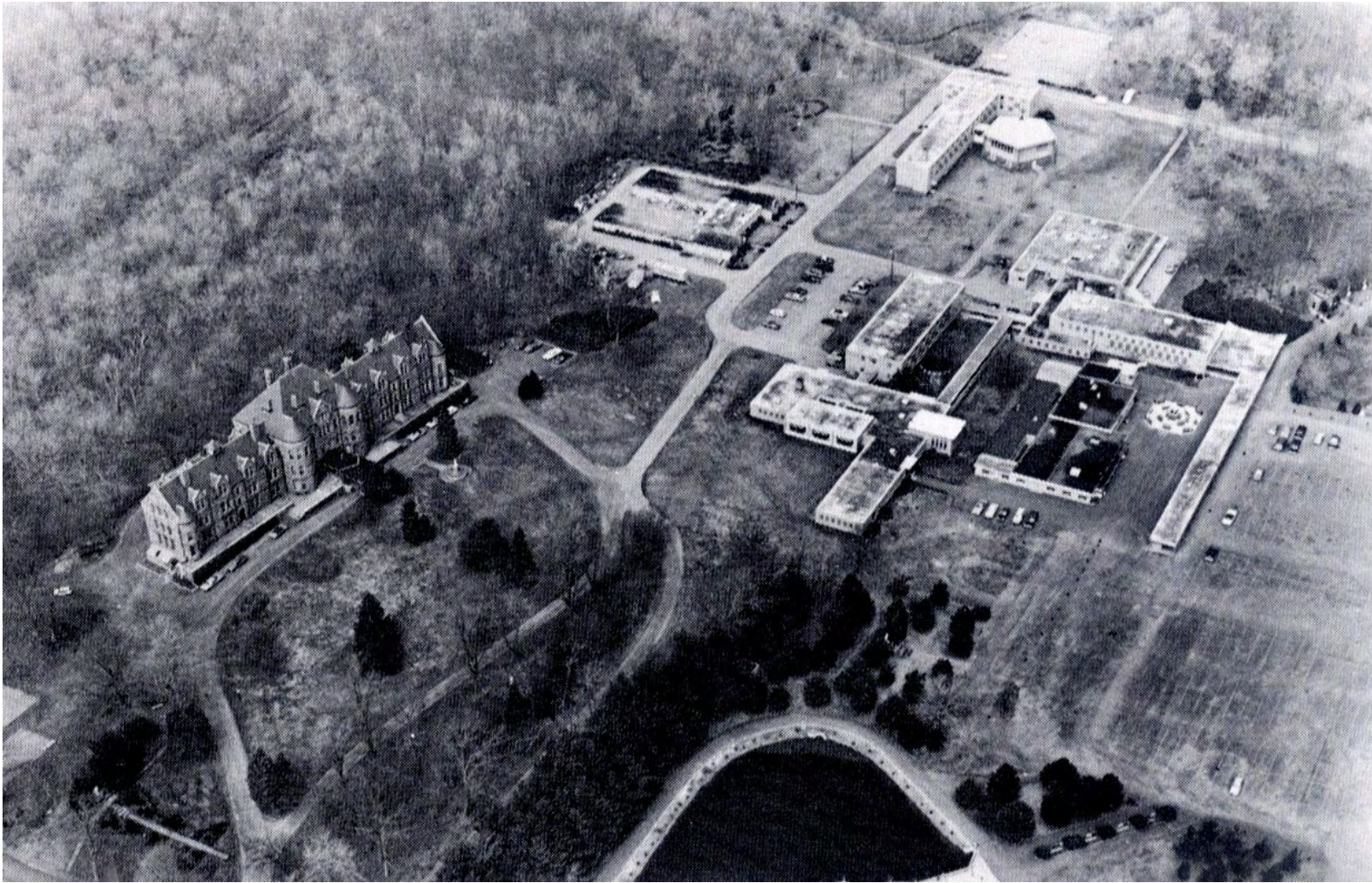
Residents of the tent city go about their daily lives.



A barbecue at tent city. Providence skyline in background.

In 1999, the Catholic Seminary at LaSalette Monastery burned to the ground. This iconic building was the spiritual and architectural focal point of the LaSalette complex. The seminary was a sturdy and reassuring presence on the hill looking down at the LaSalette complex, leaving no doubt as to the spirit of the site. It provided not only an identity for the monastery but also a home and workplace for the brothers and priests at LaSalette. While the tragic loss did spur the construction of the new Shrine Church and the remodeling of the Welcome Center, it was a significant loss of facilities and site identity.

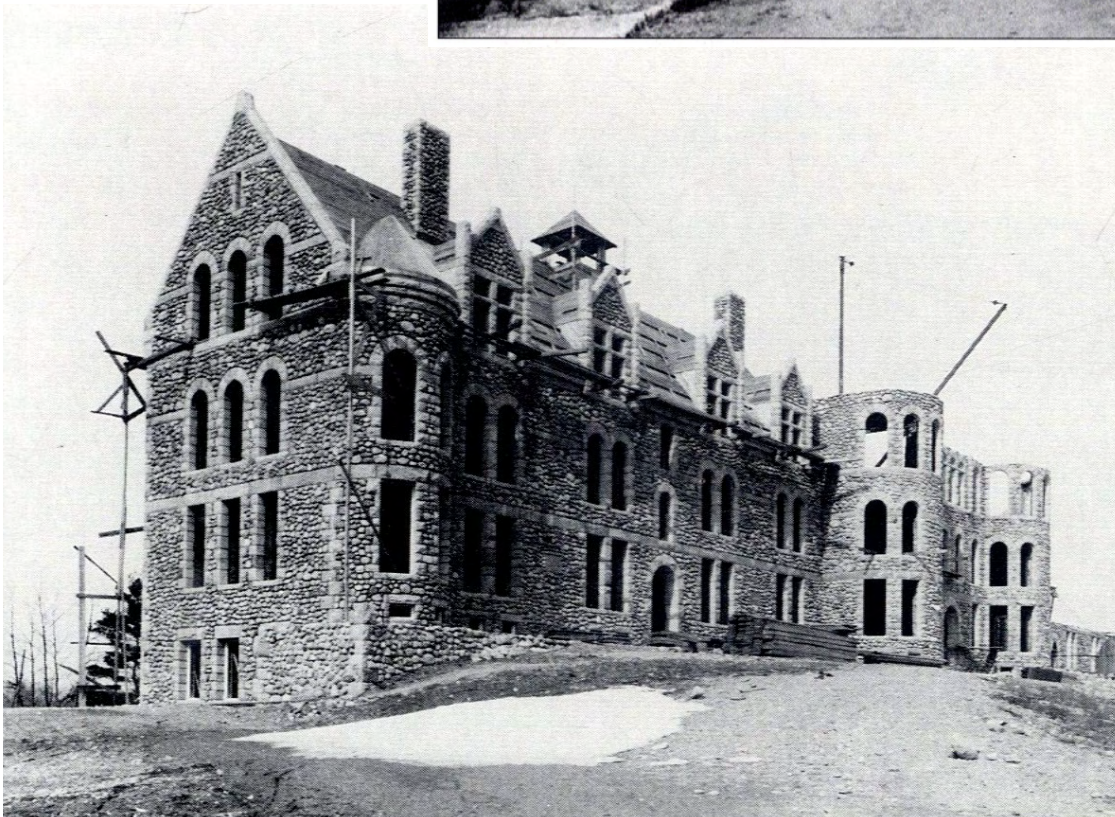
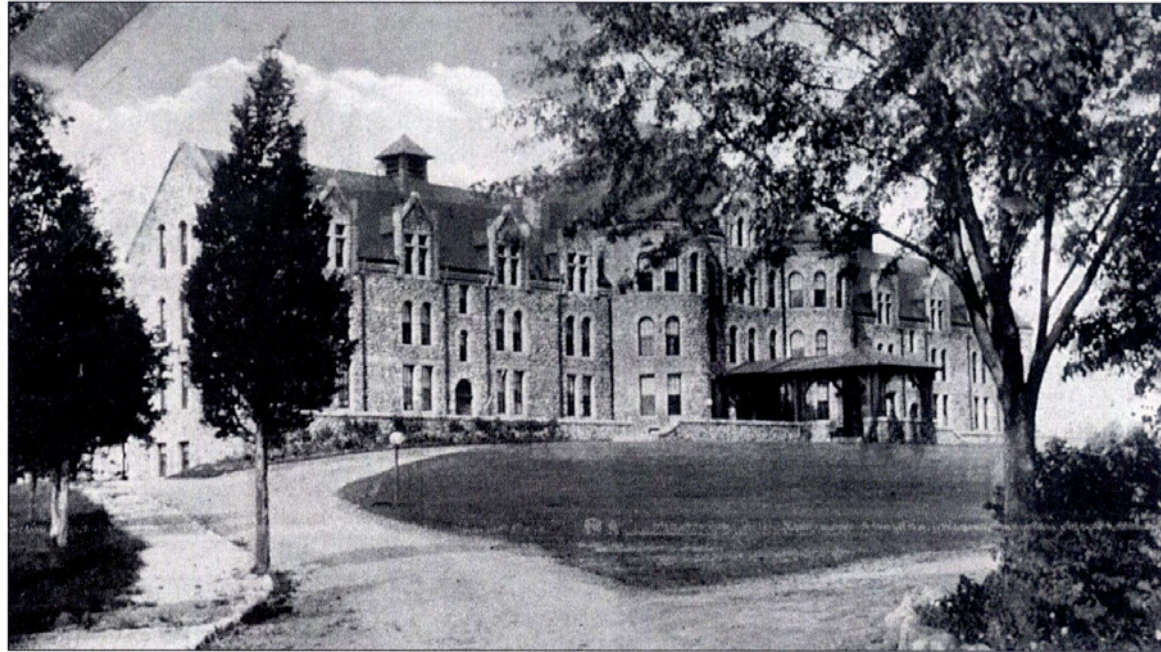
In proposing a Monastery and Homeless Rehabilitation Center at LaSalette Shrine, I would be providing the LaSalette Missionaries both modern facilities and the opportunity to bring both physical and spiritual aid to local unfortunates.



A pre-fire aerial view of the LaSalette complex in 1978. Note the dominant presence of seminary on the hill.



The building was first constructed by Dr. James M. Solomon, who claimed he could guarantee the cure of cancer and tumors.



Solomon's Sanitarium was completed in 1902 at the cost of \$400,000. After failing in 1937, it was bought by LaSalette in 1942.



Picture taken soon after sanitarium completion. 1902

PROJECT STATEMENT

18

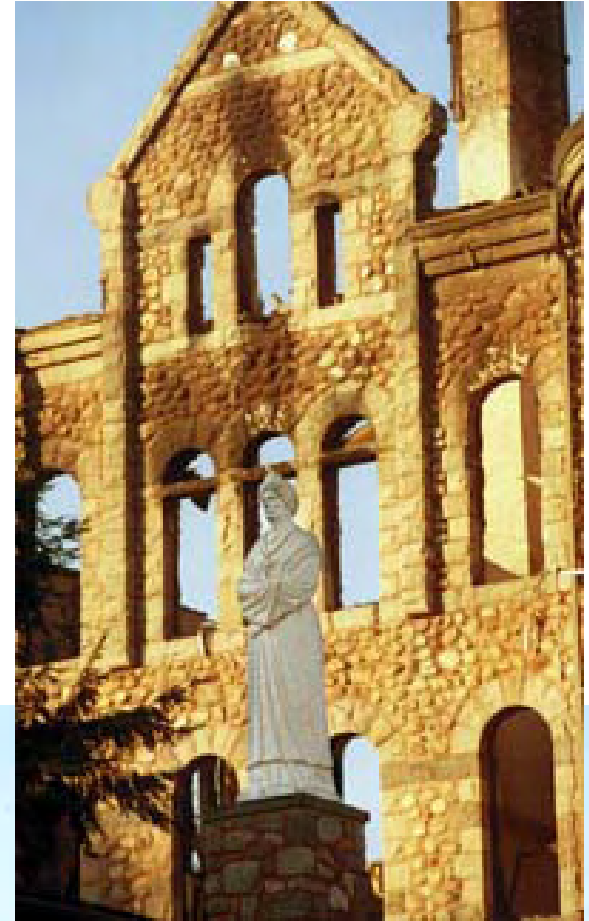


I propose to design a monastery and homeless rehabilitation center. The monastery will provide a spiritual retreat and place of learning and reflection for members of the clergy. It will include housing, offices, a school, a library, gardens and a chapel. In the past, the Church has been a catalyst for architecture and progress in design, and it still has great resources today. However, it is important in this day for the Catholic Church to maintain an open face and continue its tradition of good public works. It is also traditional for a monastery to provide some sort of service to the community where it is located.



For this reason I propose that the monastery have facilities where the homeless are taken in and given shelter, food, education and counseling in exchange for light labor. Labor could include growing produce, tending livestock, or facilities management and upkeep. Not only would the proceeds help the monastery on a goal for self-sufficiency, but it offers the underprivileged a dignified means of supporting themselves on the road to recovery and eventual re-assimilation into society.





PROGRAM

22



Education

Lobby/Reception
Library
Classrooms
Art Room
Lounge

Reading Room
Teacher Offices
Office Lounge
Counseling Offices
Waiting Room

A goal of this facility is to rehabilitate the homeless, in part by providing certain educational opportunities for them. This education will be useful in determining a trade, learning to manage their own finances properly, and perhaps even provide a foundation on which higher education can be built. Also important is counseling, as parts of their lives may have been traumatic in some way and therefore be linked to their current condition. Space is also provided for quiet study and reading. The classrooms can also be used as a facility to further educate or train members of the monastery or community. Lobby/Reception is on the first floor. Library and lounge are on the second, along with an outdoor shaded patio. Classrooms, study space, offices and counseling are all on the third floor.

Monastery

Hospitium
Chapel

Common Room
Kitchen/Dining

As the functions of the monastery expand and diversify, the more staff will be required. These spaces will support the activities of some permanent faculty and visiting clergymen as they perform their daily duties. This part of the facility will be attached to an existing monastery building, providing easy access to other areas.

Living Quarters

Single Male Suites
Single Female Suites
Couples Suites

Family Suites
Suite Common Room
Suite Kitchen

It will be necessary to provide housing and services for the homeless that will be taken into the rehabilitation program. It is important to provide separate areas for single men, single women, couples, and family groups. The housing is organized by the suite lifestyle. A suite consists of a common space, a kitchen, shared outdoor spaces, and four rooms, with two residents per room. A suite will become a tight knit unit, which will become almost independent while remaining integrated to the rest of the facility through shared spaces. They will be taught how to cook, if need be, and then be expected to cook some meals for themselves.

Shared Spaces and Facility Services

Common Dining
Kitchen
Produce Sales
Cafe
Jobs Office

Laundry
Gym
Storage
Mechanical

Part of the rehabilitation process will involve entering the workforce. The homeless will enjoy the hospitality of the brothers but they will be required to participate in communal tasks. These will include typical grounds keeping and general maintenance jobs. Other jobs include growing produce and farm work, or produce sales and cooking. Not only will this work create a sense of purpose and pride, but part of the proceeds will go towards maintaining the facility and upkeep for the monastery, with an ultimate goal of financial self sufficiency. In order to encourage independence, they will do their own laundry in a common area. A gym will help promote physical well being and acts as a great stress reliever while building and improving self image. Job experience here will help the residents get jobs out in the city, a service that the jobs office facilitates

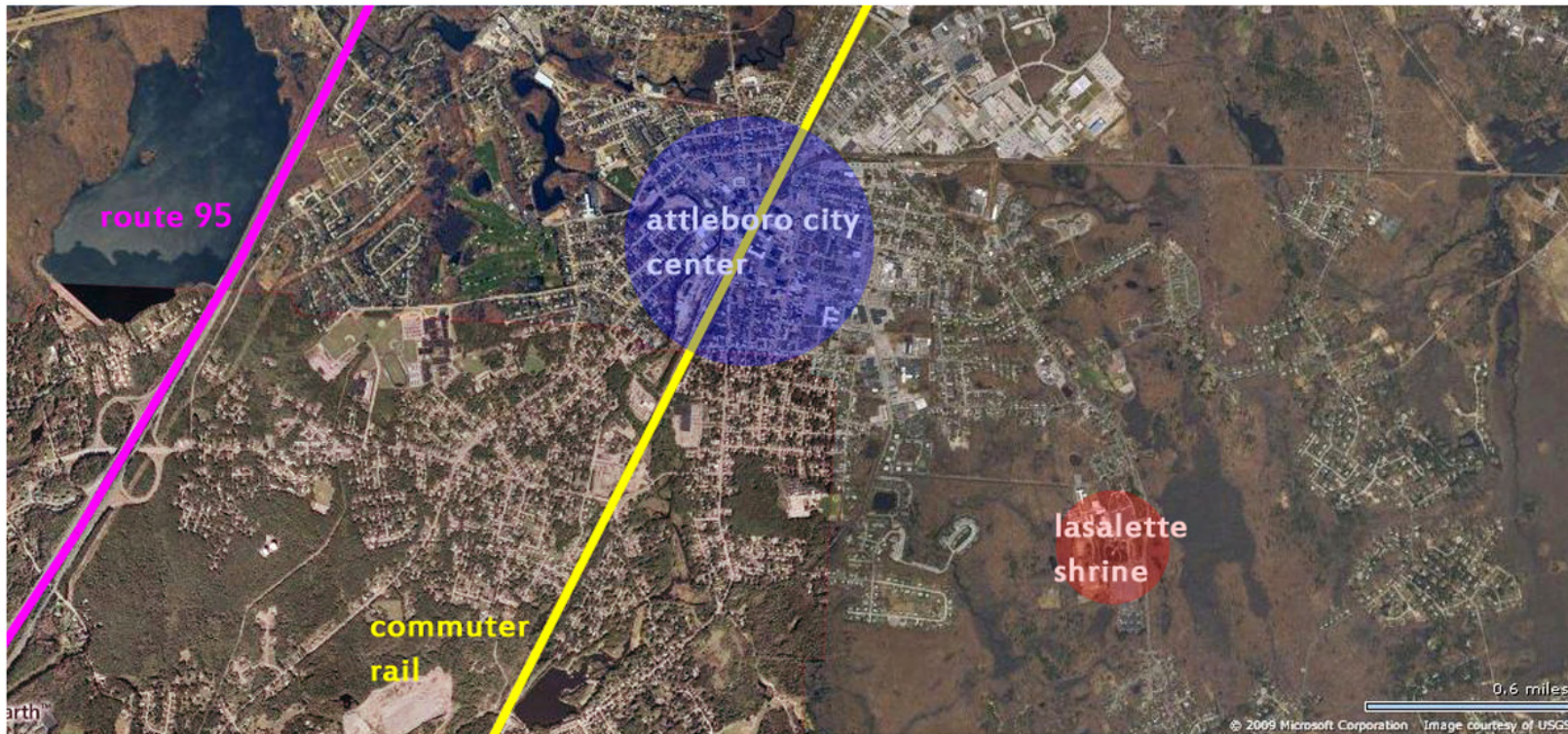
SITE ANALYSIS

28





The city of Attleboro is located conveniently close to the civic centers of both Providence and Boston. This enables the Shrine of LaSalette to serve a wide area of needy people locally.



LaSalette Shrine is located conveniently close to downtown Attleboro, the commuter rail that runs through it, and route 95. Access to a transportation network enables an easier commute to a job.



There is a considerable amount of open land around the site. This not only provides room for expansion, but also creates a buffer between this spiritual retreat and the rest of the city. Also visible is the clear excess of paved parking space. This valuable land could be made available for fields, buildings, or open space if some of the parking was eliminated or consolidated.

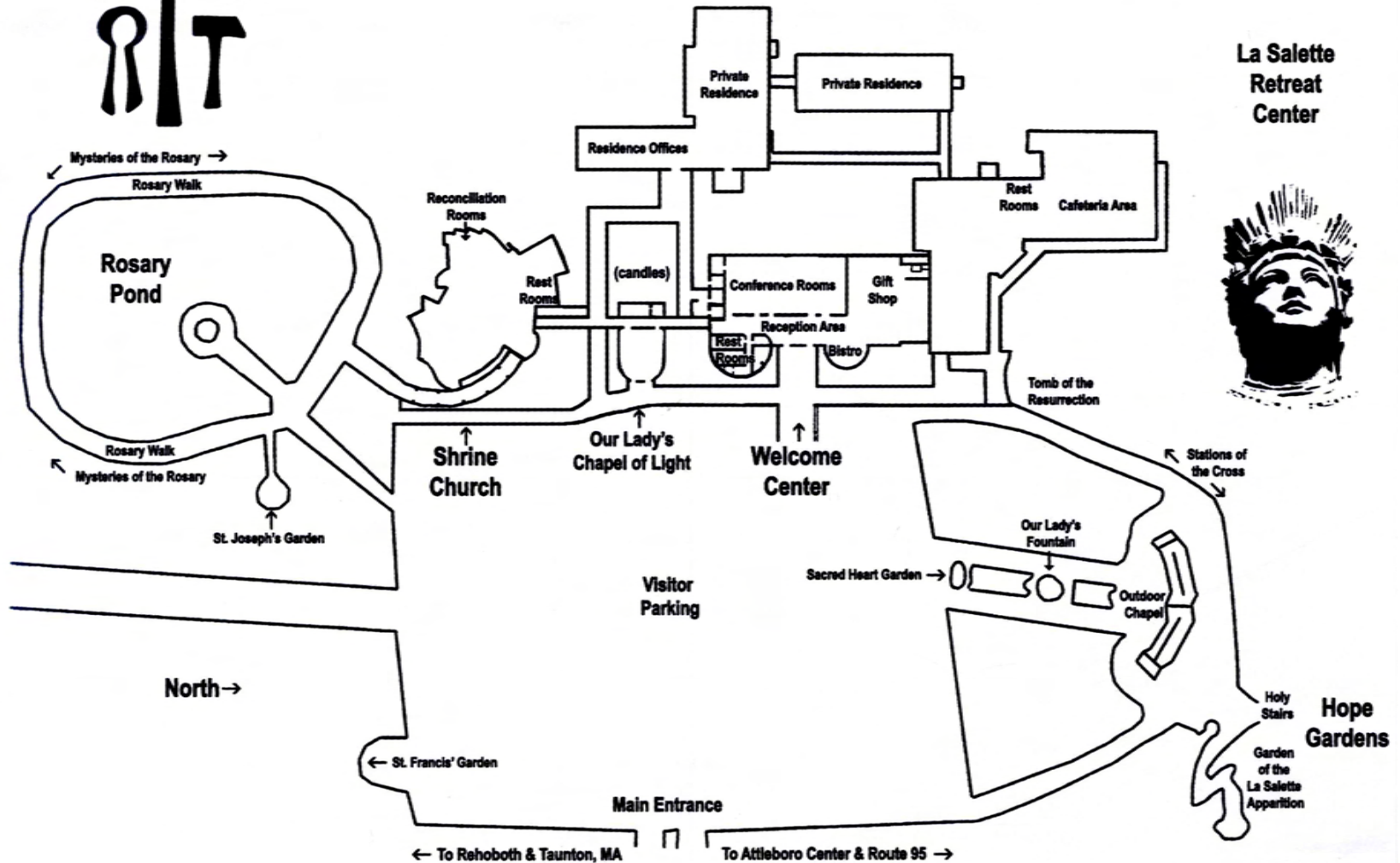


Site of old seminary building provides a perfect place for the proposed homeless rehabilitation center. The site is removed from the street and behind the more public buildings of the monastery.



National Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette • 947 Park St. • Attleboro, MA 02703

Tel: 508-222-5410 • web: www.lasalette-shrine.org



Pamphlet available for visitors



Hines | Wasser
Associates

**Proposed Sanctuary
National Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette**

A Collaborative Project of the National Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette, Mass Audubon, the Attleboro Land Trust, and the City of Attleboro
Concept Plan by Mass Audubon's Ecological Extension Service and Hines | Wasser + Associates

Left: Dashed turquoise line delineates land grant from the city of Attleboro to the LaSalette Shrine. Include the woods and wetlands west of the old seminary building. This proposed wildlife sanctuary will not be available to be built on, but can be incorporated as a programmatic function reserved for nature trails and meditative walks.

Below: Images of the Site

35

Existing site of old Seminary



Memorial Plaque for fire





Panoramic images of the site





Entrance Boulevard

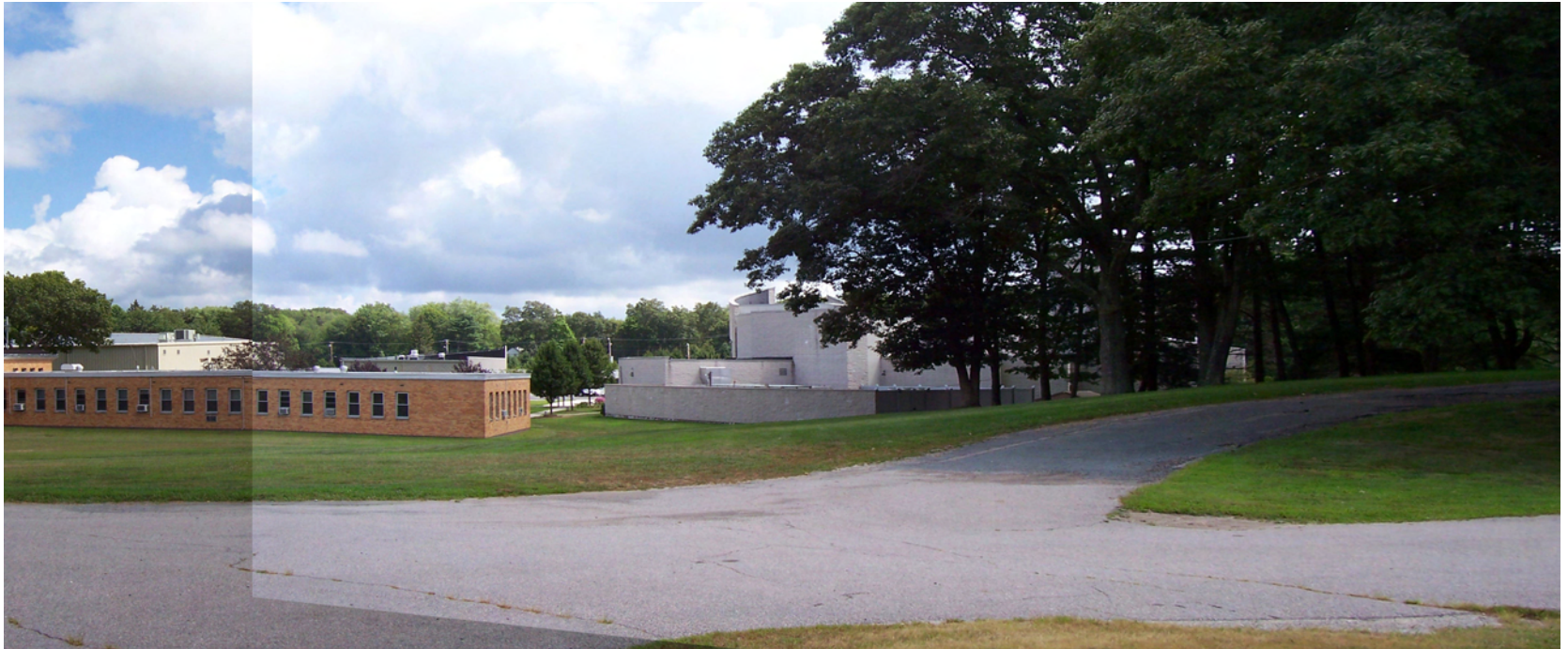
37





Above and Below: Panorama and images of existing monastery





Below: Images of new Shrine



Images of Shrine

Right: Garden of the Apparition of Our Lady of LaSalette

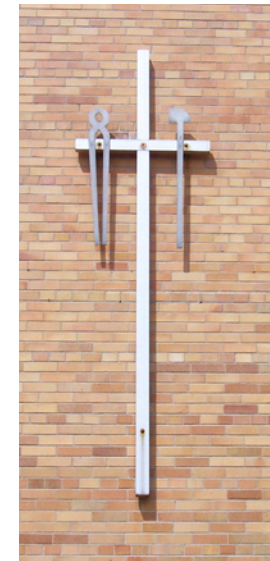
Below: Holy Stairs



40



Cross with hammer and tongs. Design specific to LaSalette Missionaries and serves as their symbol.







42

LaSalette Retreat Center: Programs include couples counseling, spiritual direction, cancer survivors, confirmation groups, and holy days/weeks. For those seeking spiritual renewal and a deeper relationship with God.





Structure: Outdoor chapel and nativity setup for Christmas.

Foreground to right: Fountain of Our Lady

PRECEDENTS

44



Pacific Garden Mission: Homeless Shelter

Architect: Tigerman McCurry Architects

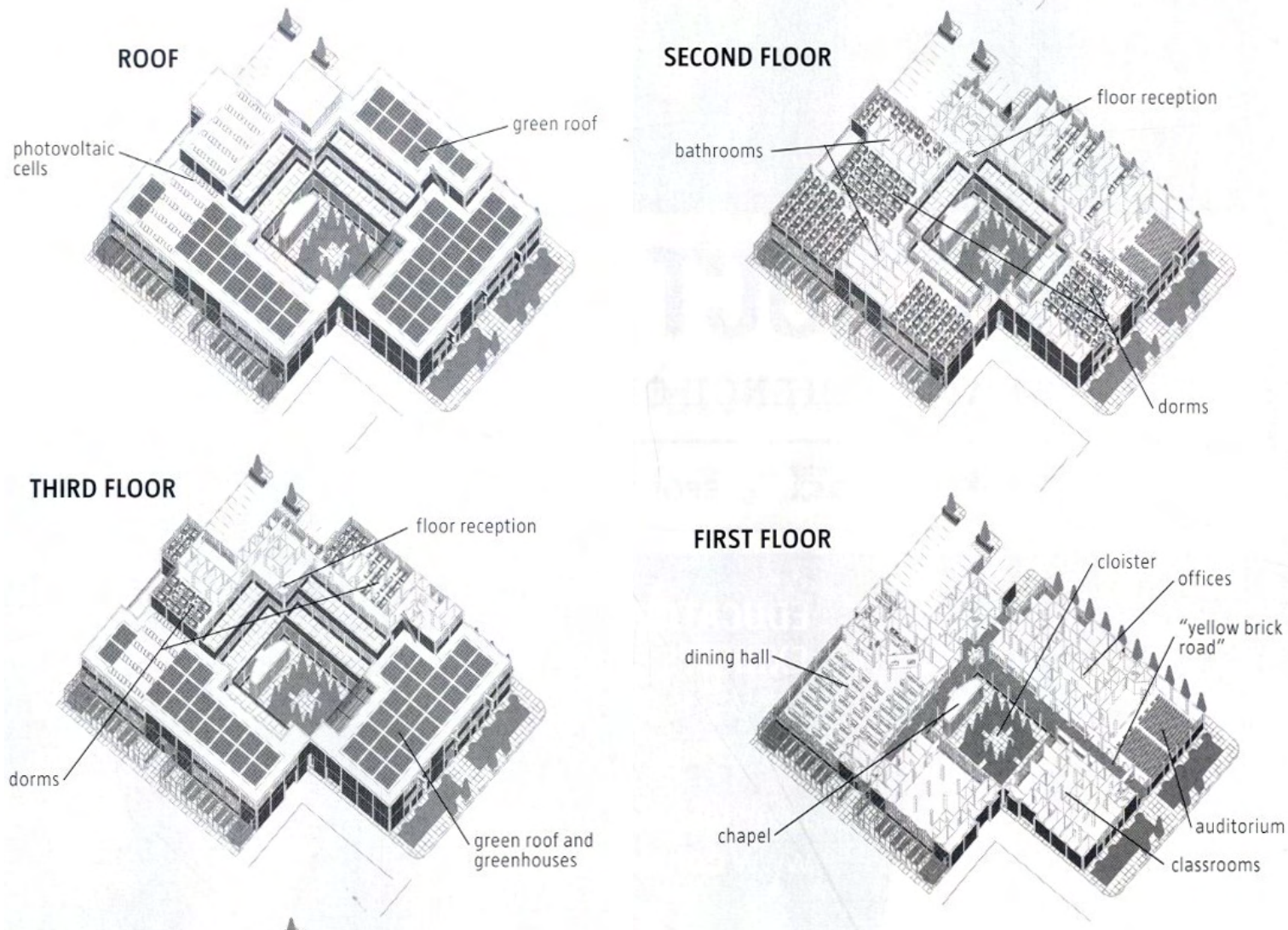
Location: Chicago

The Pacific Garden Mission is one of the largest homeless shelters in the world. It can accommodate 1000 people in bunks and feeds 1800 per meal. This building is a good study for the type of program I will need for the homeless rehabilitation center. It includes a laundry, libraries, a barbershop, two gyms, and a used clothes store. Tigerman explains that "This is not a home, its an institution. You are trying to get people back into society."

Some of the homeless sign up to work at the facility, and attend daily classes focused on re-assimilating them into society. My program proposes that all the homeless work at the facility and attend classes and/or counseling.



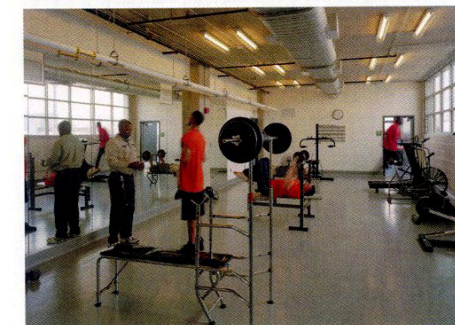
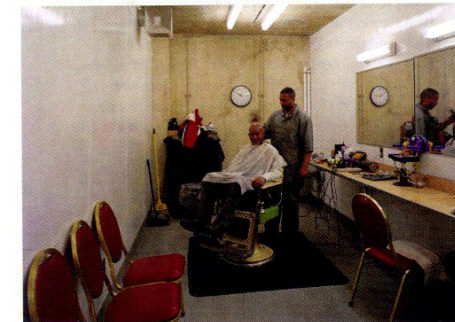
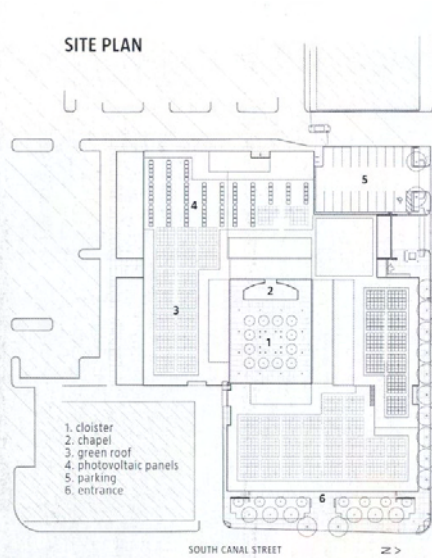
Pacific Garden Mission: Homeless Shelter



46

The PGM also includes greenhouses, roof gardens, and a composting center. My program includes fields and greenhouses for growing produce which can then be sold or consumed, mitigating the cost of running the facility. The ground floor meeting rooms and the upper floor dormitories are organized around a central courtyard, like a monastery, providing a quiet place for contemplation and meditation or just relaxation.

Pacific Garden Mission: Homeless Shelter



La Tourette: Monastery

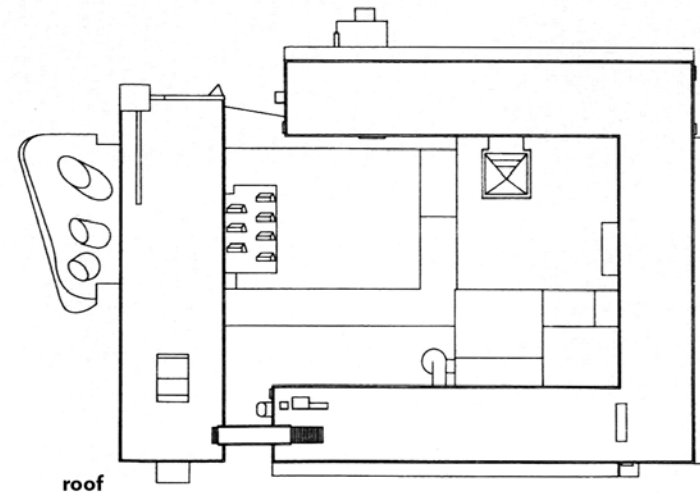
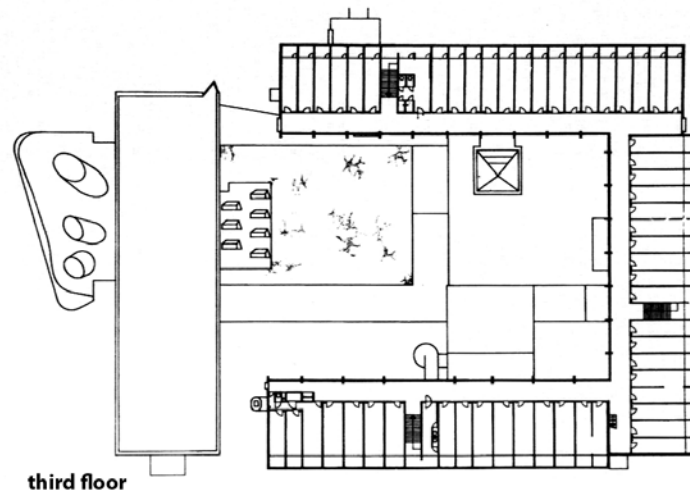
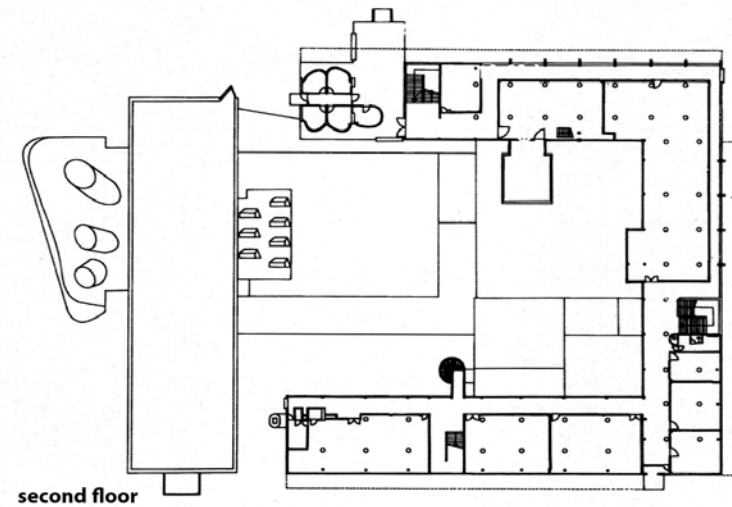
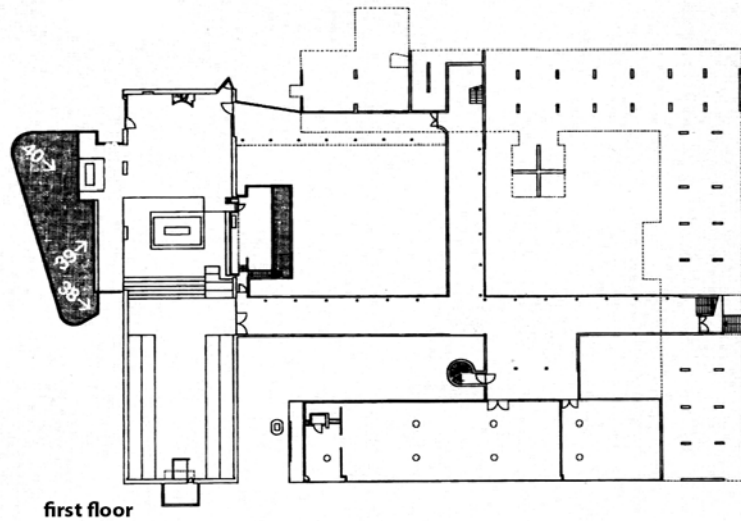


Architect: Le Corbusier
Location: La Tourette,
France 15 miles
northeast of Lyons

With this design, Le Corbusier fulfilled the needs of the monastery on both a programmatic and individual level. This is a good study for the religious functions of my proposed facility because of the program and its architecturally expressed spiritual qualities. The rawness of the materials he used express some of the ideals of the Dominicans: austerity and poverty. It was important for the building to be rough and inexpensive as one of the monks' vows was one of poverty. Of crucial importance was the need for a constant comfortable temperature and a quiet atmosphere in order for the residents to have a place for continuous intellectual work.



La Tourette: Monastery



The program includes a church, crypt, vestery, refectory and chapterhouse on the first floor. The second floor is confessionals, common rooms, and the library with the reading room. The third floor is all cells and on the top level is a grass roof.

La Tourette: Monastery

PRECEDENTS

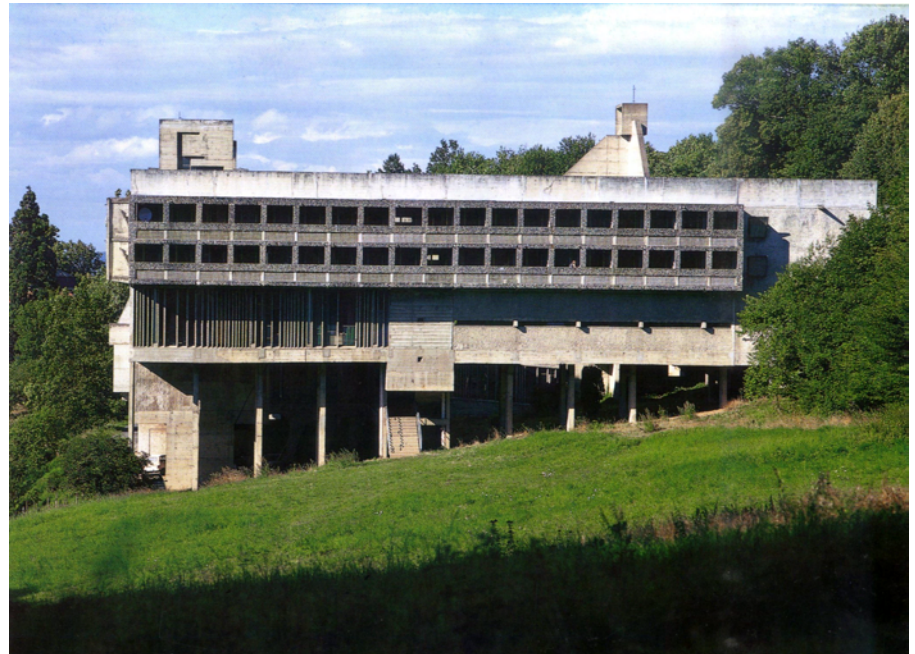
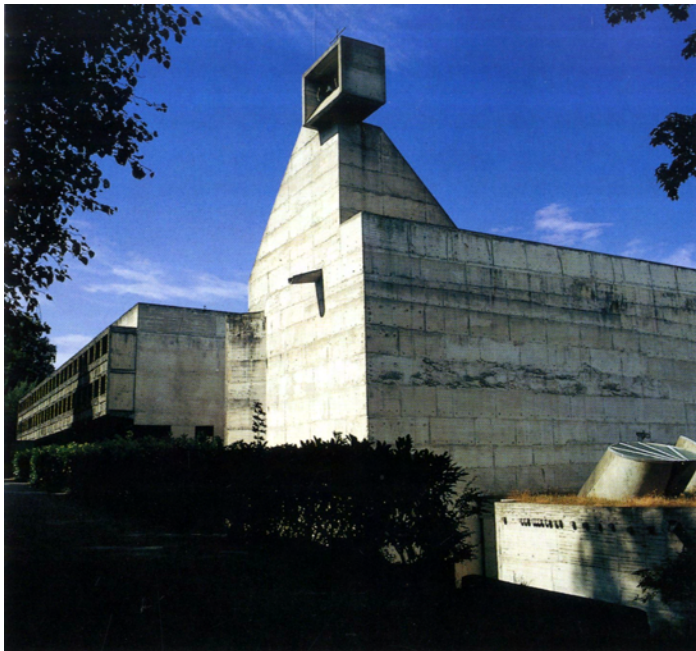
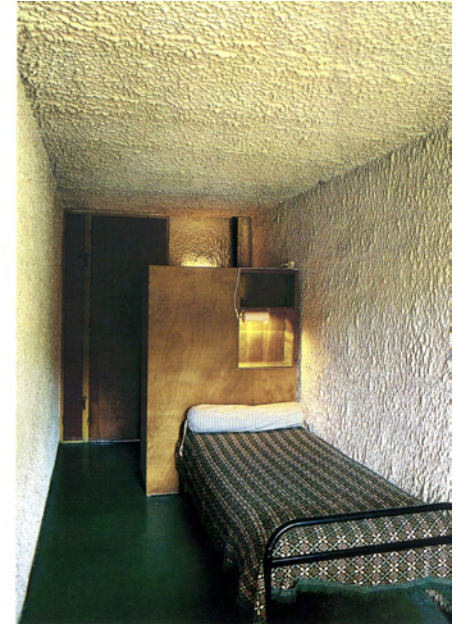
50



Views of the church and the crypt, both with powerful use of natural light. Light is supremely important in this building and for Le Corbusier.

La Tourette: Monastery

The austerity of the monks' cells contrast with the magnificent views offered from their windows. The LaSalette site also has the potential to provide pleasing views.

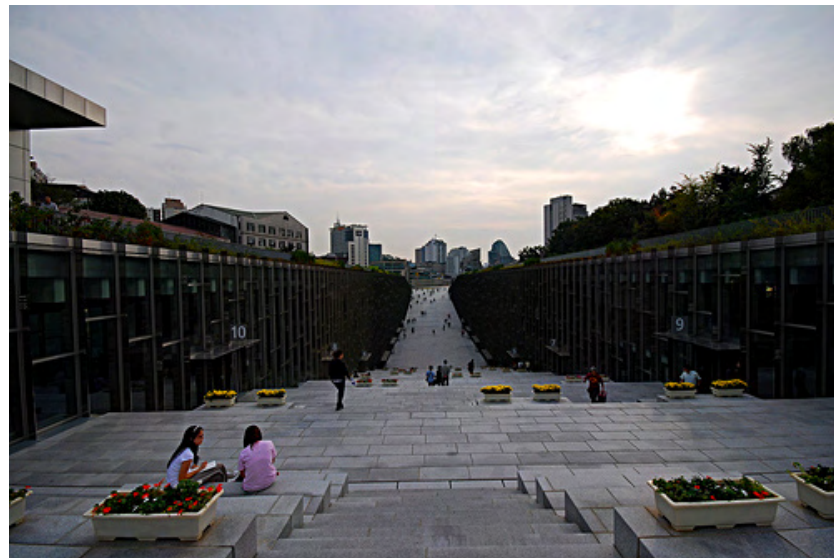


EWHA Womans' University: "In the Land"

PRECEDENTS



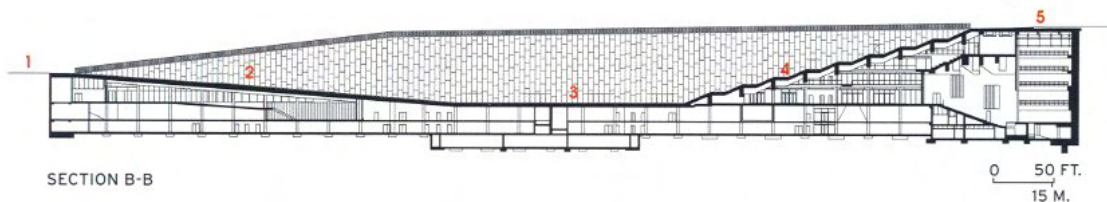
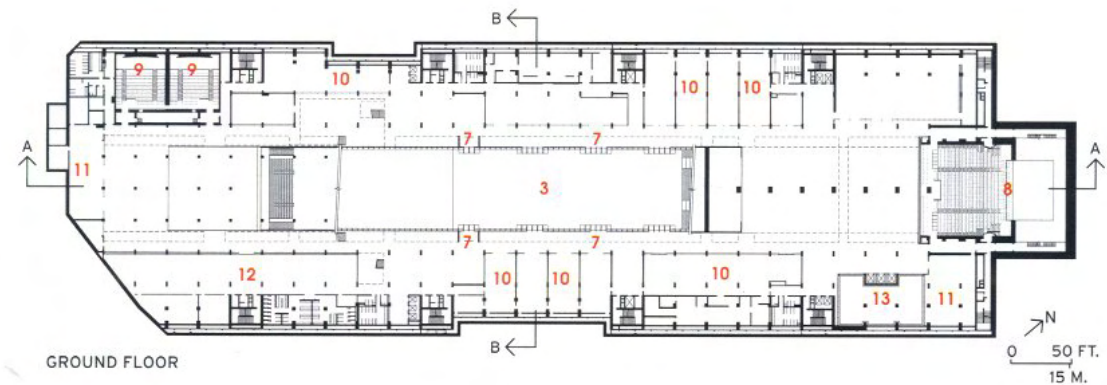
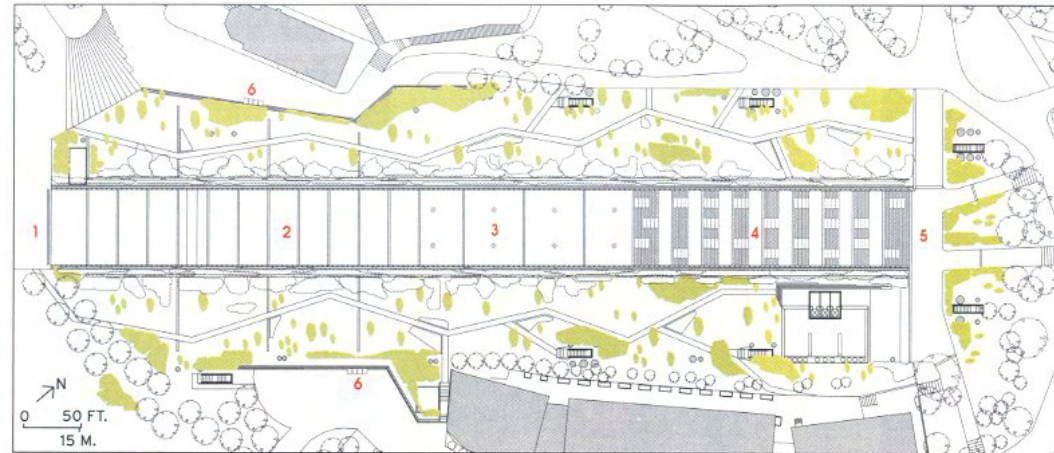
Perrault believes firmly in an integration of nature with architecture, a philosophy I will include in my design.



EWHA Womans University: "In the Land"

Architect: Dominique
Perrault Architecture
Location: Seoul, South Korea

This campus building blurs the line between topography and construction as it is seamlessly integrated into the hillside it intersects. In effect it becomes deeply rooted in the land and creates an intense sensation of attachment and belonging while still having an urban presence. The building include parking and rentable commercial space in addition to gymnasium, library, cinema, restaurant, and various gathering spaces and study halls. The vast array of varying programmatic spaces in one large structure may provide inspiration for my design as my program is also widely varied. Also important is the strong architectural identity this building gives the campus.

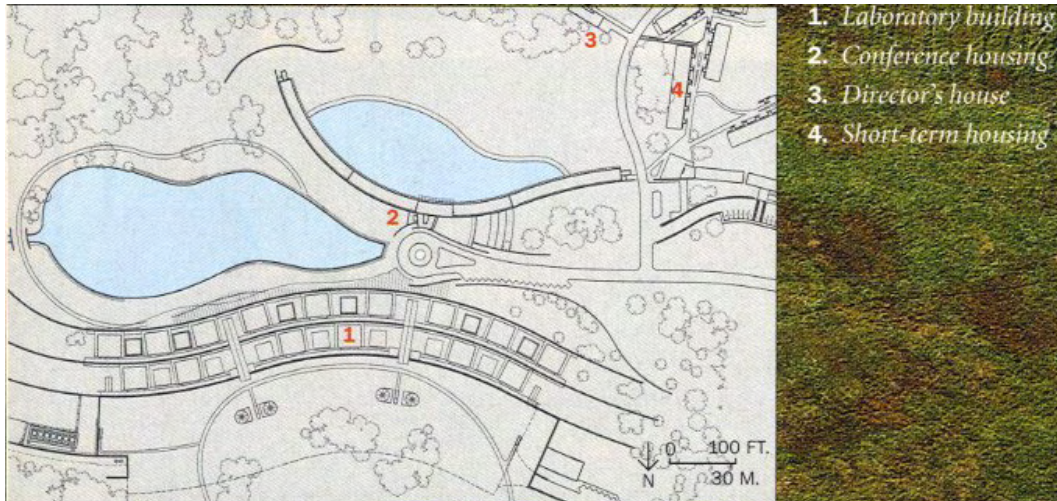


Janelia Farm Research Campus: "In the Land"



Architect: Rafael Vinoly
Architects
Location: Ashburn, Virginia

This facility is a three-tiered terraced structure which is inserted into the gentle curves of an existing hill to serve as a research center for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. The campus offers 96 rooms for overnight accommodation and a large conference center. Part of the design philosophy was to foster interaction between scientists in their laboratories, offices, and gathering areas. Vinoly says "We were told to forget about hierarchy and tenure - just convey the reality of the excitement of research". This building shows how a large and complex program can be combined and seamlessly integrated into the natural landscape of a place with sensitivity to topography. The addition of water, reflection pools, green roofs and vegetation all work to bring the natural world into the building, creating a fantastic environment to work in.

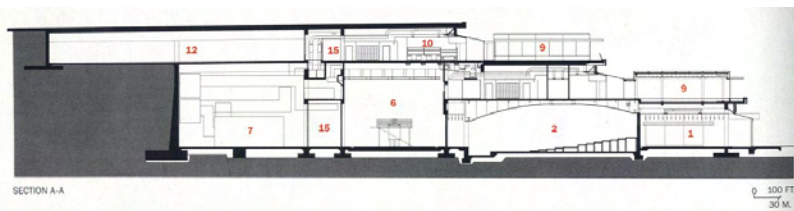


Janelia Farm Research Campus: "In the Land"

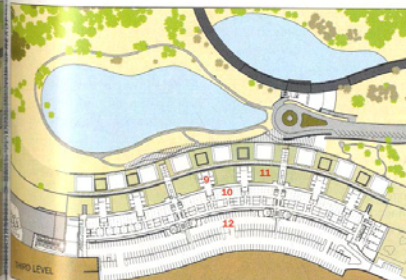
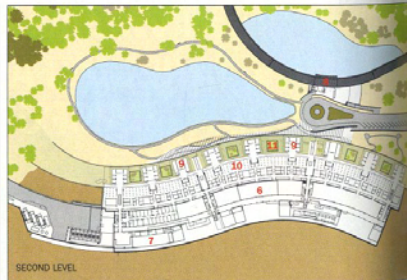
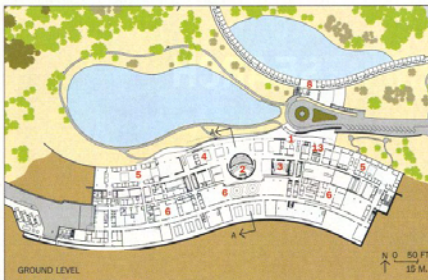


PRECEDENTS

55



- 1. Lab building lobby
- 2. Auditorium
- 3. Seminar room
- 4. Library
- 5. Offices
- 6. Lab support
- 7. Building support
- 8. Conference housing
- 9. Office cell
- 10. Labs
- 11. Roof terrace
- 12. Parking
- 13. Dining
- 14. Main stair
- 15. Corridor



Center for the Contemporary Arts: "In the Land"

Architect: Brisac Gonzalez

Location: Aberdeen, Scotland

This Center for Contemporary Arts is part of a plan to make Aberdeen a real tourist destination and is a renewal project for the city's ailing Union Terrace Gardens. It will house galleries, filmmaking studios, education, printmaking, and retail. It seeks to preserve one of Aberdeen's only urban green spaces and integrate itself into the land. This sensitive solution used existing pathways and curves as a guide for the design.



Environmental Park: Monumental Architectural Identity



Architect: Adhocmsl, Modo Studio, Best Before, Barbarela Studio
Location: Santomero, Southern Spain

This building is a Center of Education for Environmental Matters and a Forest Museum. It is part of a new park called the "City of the Environment". Located in an old copper mine in southern Spain, the "City" covers 15 hectares and preserves much of the existing excavated earth. This building integrates into the existing topography while developing a significant architectural presence on the site. It is the kind of building that will become synonymous with this site. It provides the type of monumentality and architectural identity that LaSalette needs after the loss of the Seminary building.

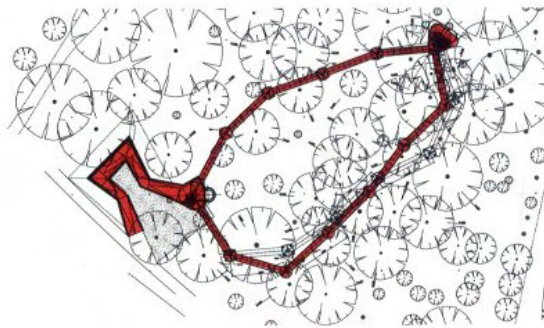
Kew Gardens: Treetop Walkways

Architect: Marks Barfield

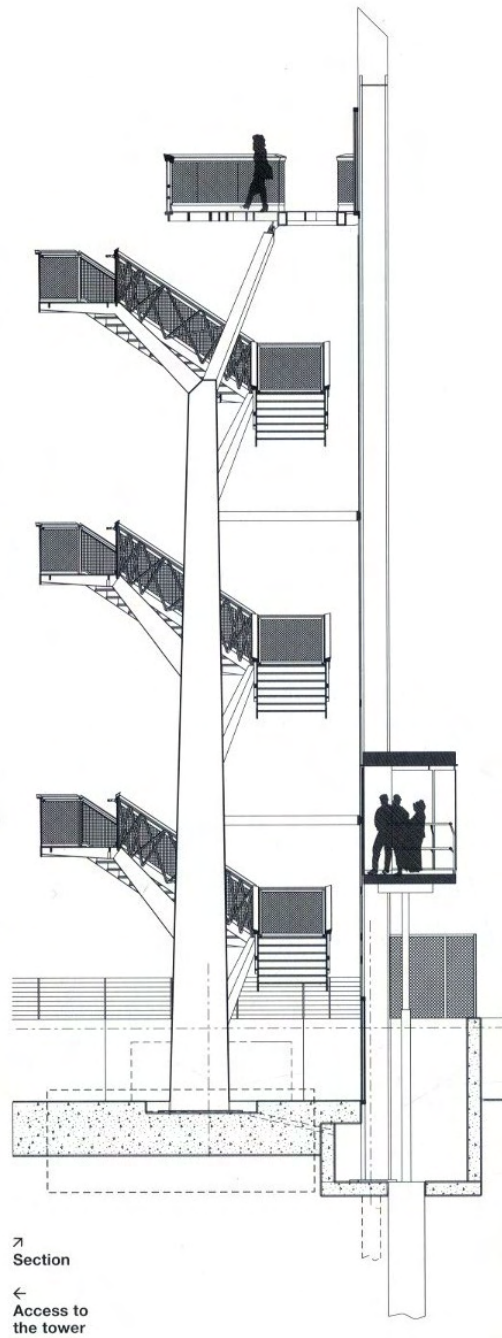
Location: Royal Botanical
Gardens, Kew, England

Kew Gardens is a World Heritage Site in Britain with spectacular and varied botanical gardens. This elevated walkway is part of a recently designed masterplan and building program for the site. The corten pylons are located so as to not disturb the tree roots.

This project could provide inspiration for a development of the 110 acre, largely wetlands, land grant LaSalette received. The structure would serve as a spiritual retreat and a place for quiet contemplation without disturbing the wildlife sanctuary.



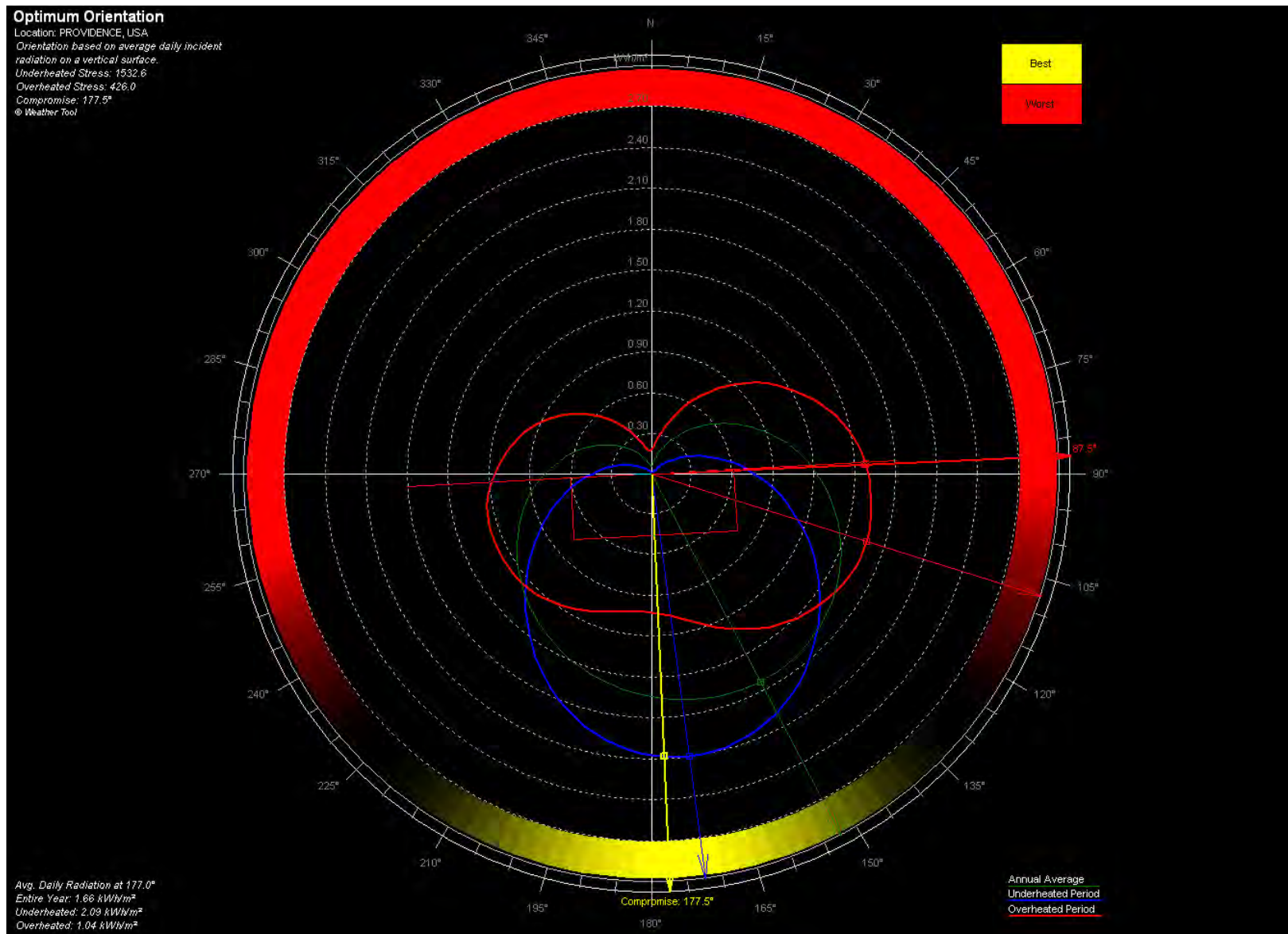
Kew Gardens: Treetop Walkways



CLIMATE DATA

60

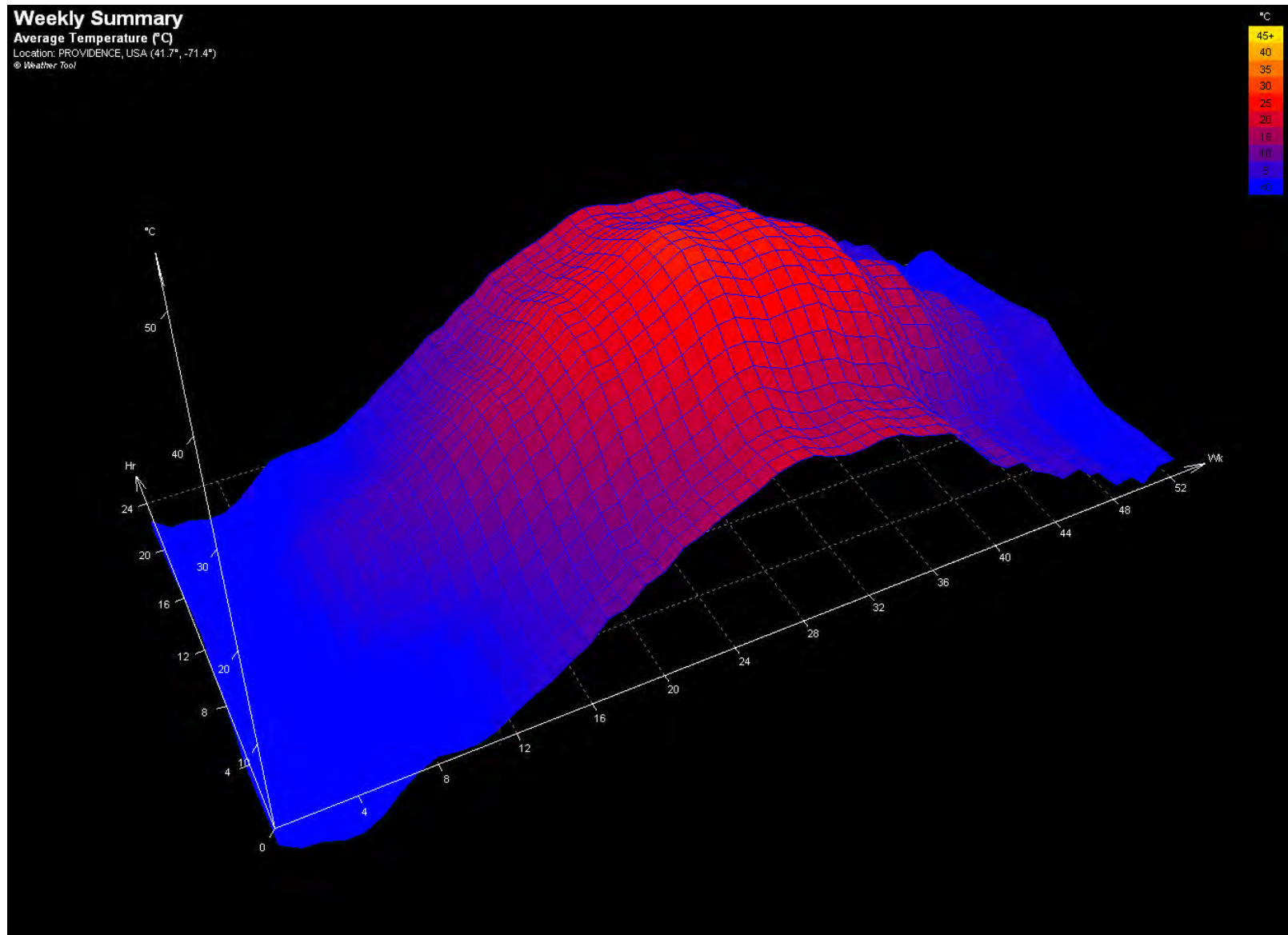




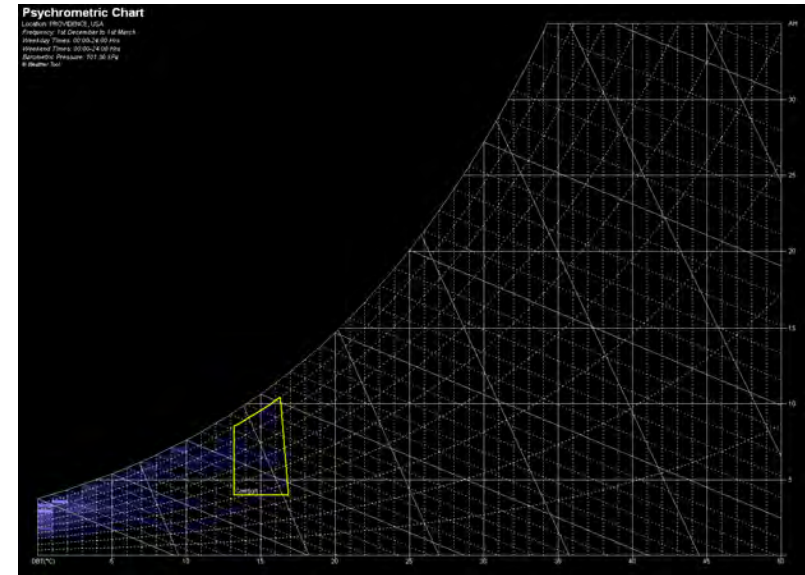
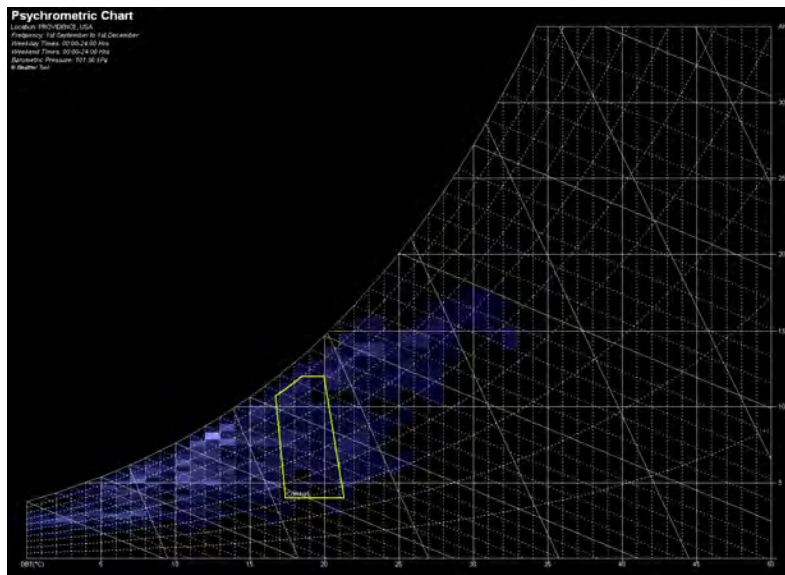
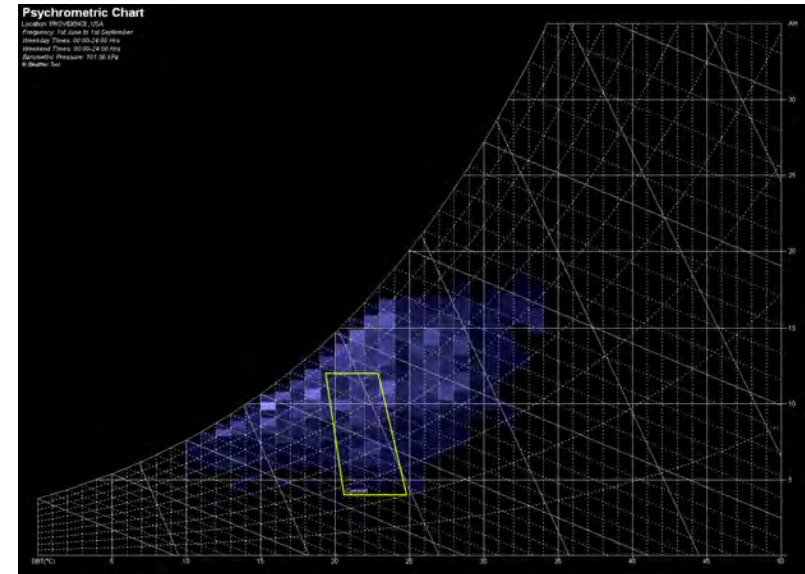
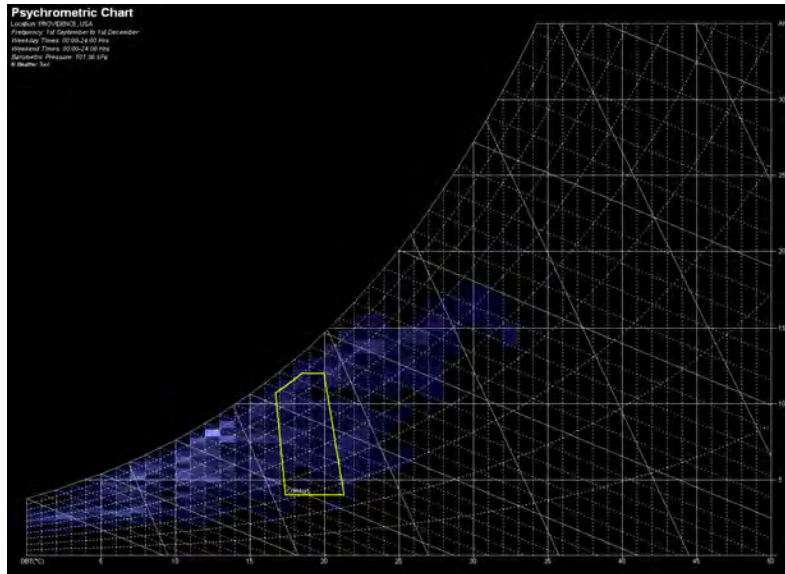
Optimum Solar Orientation Data

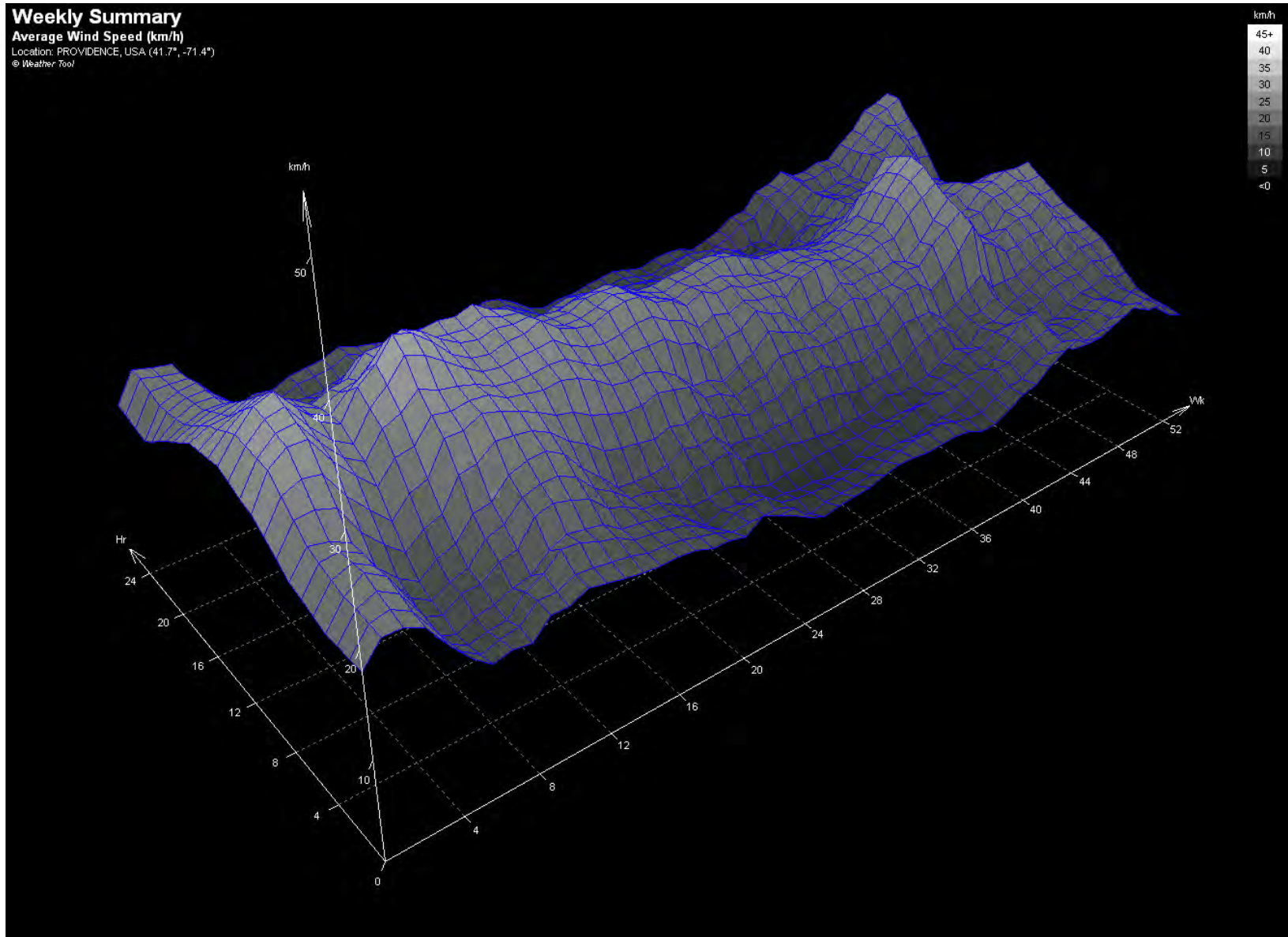
CLIMATE DATA

62

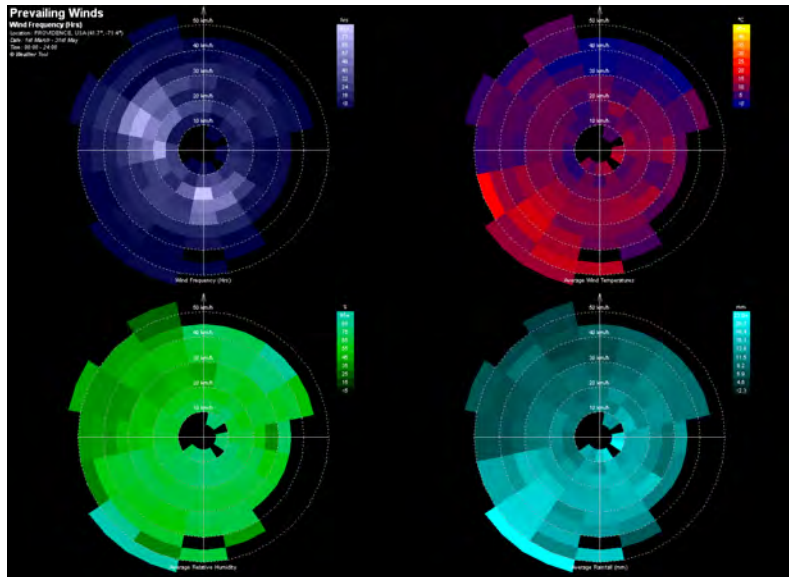


Temperature Data

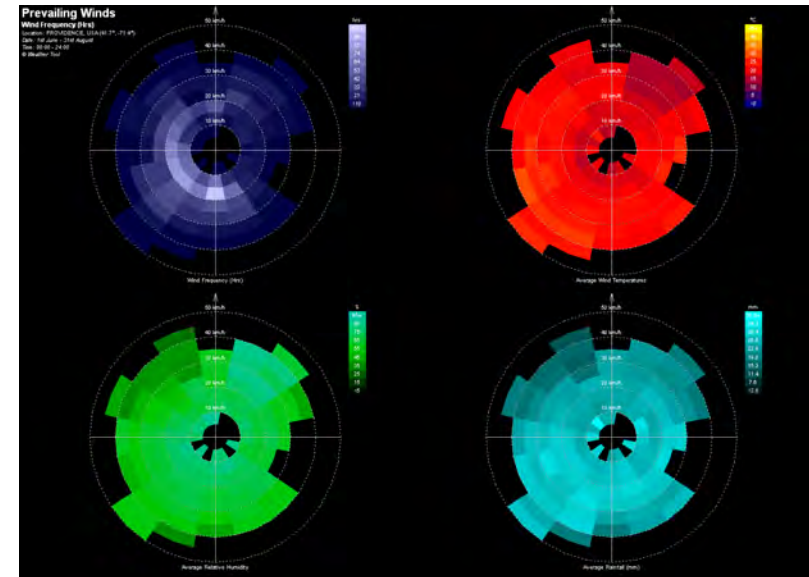




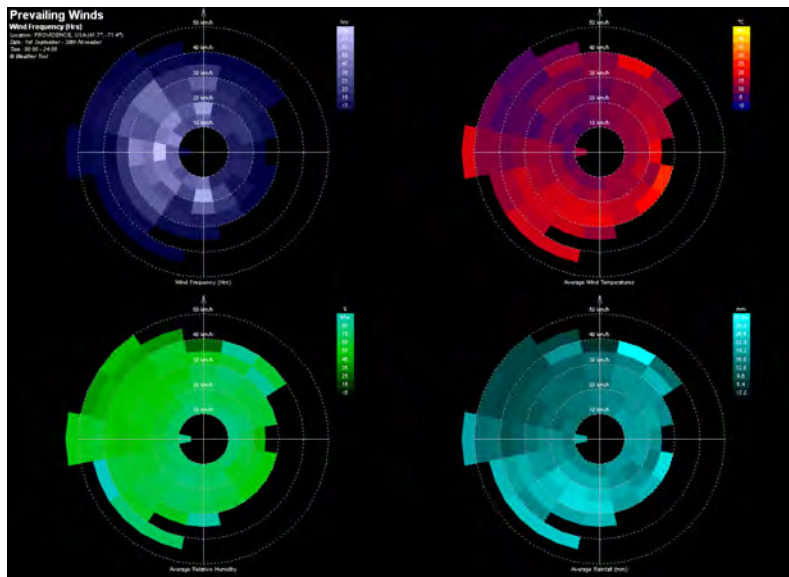
Wind Speed Data



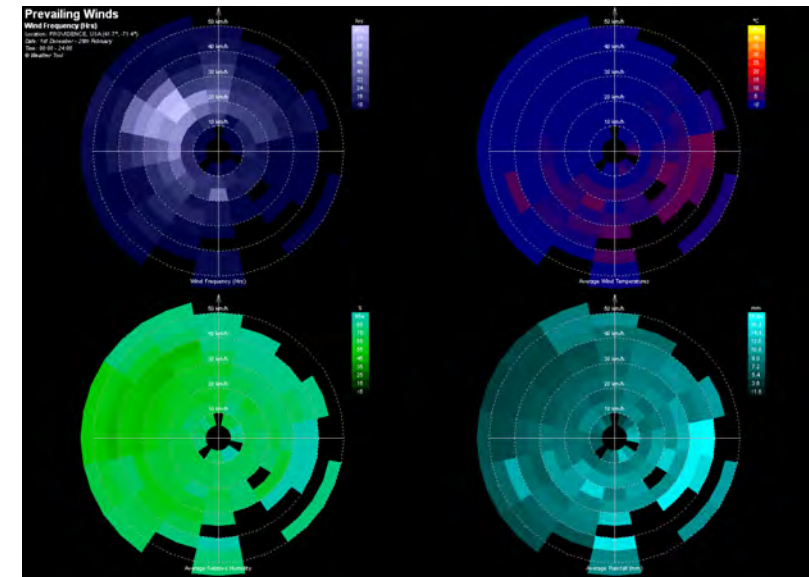
Prevailing Winds Data: Spring



Prevailing Winds Data: Summer



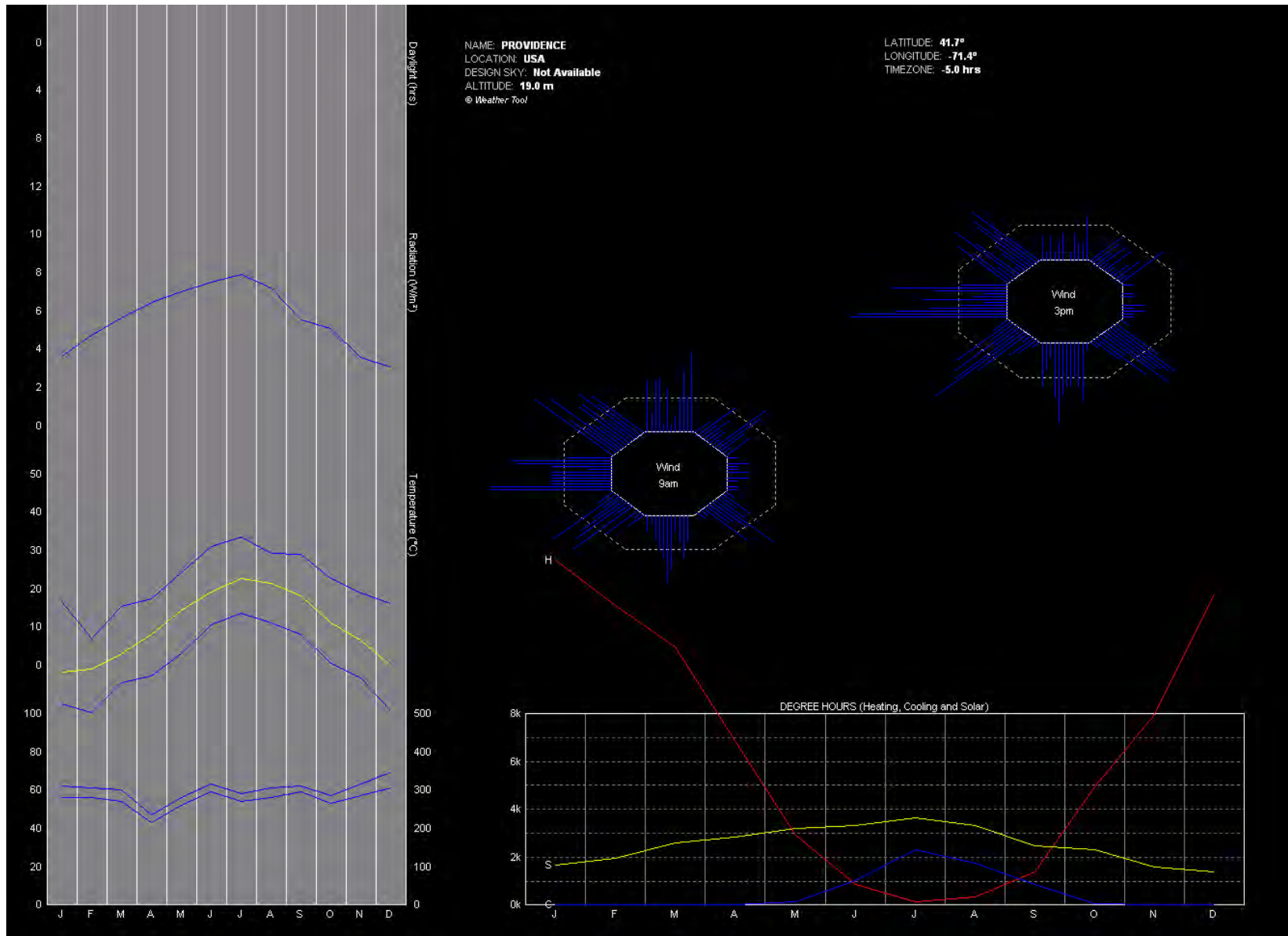
Prevailing Winds Data: Autumn



Prevailing Winds Data: Winter

CLIMATE DATA

66



Monthly Weather Data

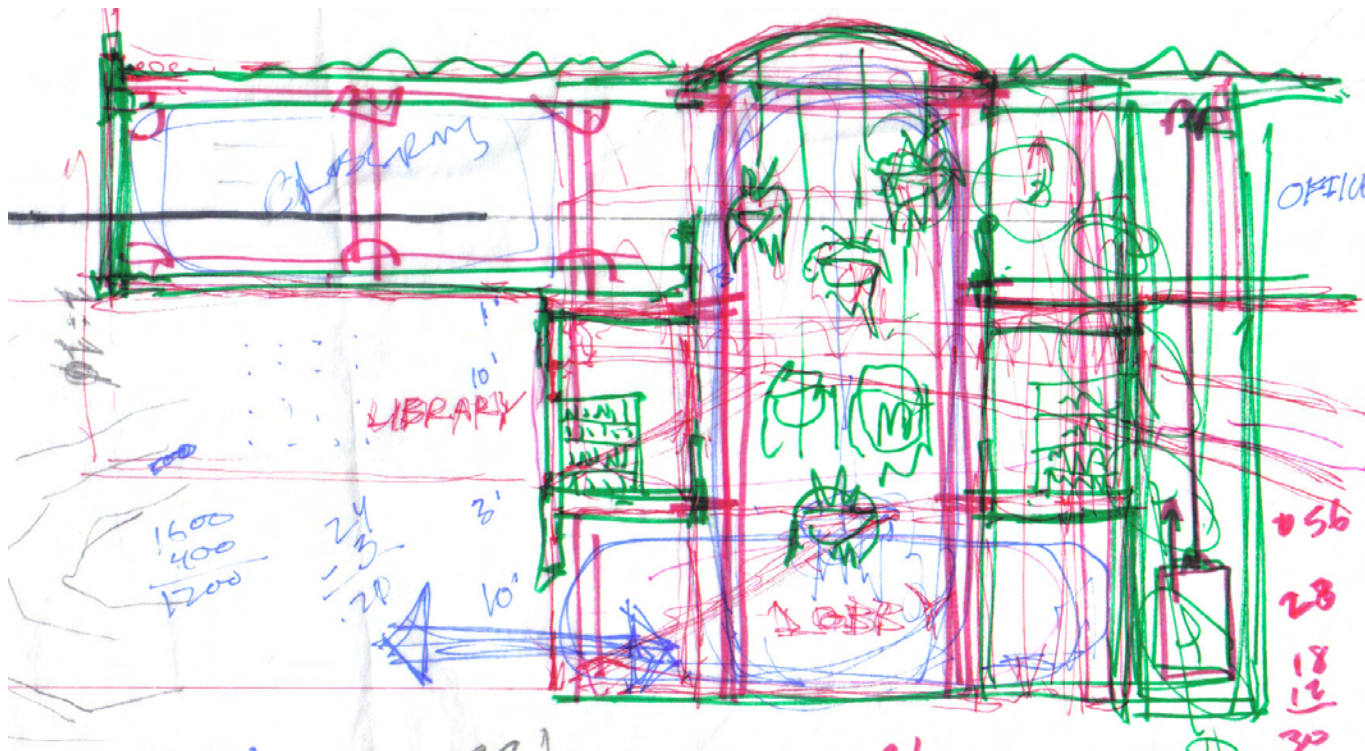
CONCEPTUAL SKETCHES

68





Early perspective showing channel cut into hill to expose old foundations of the seminary, with cantilevered education building above

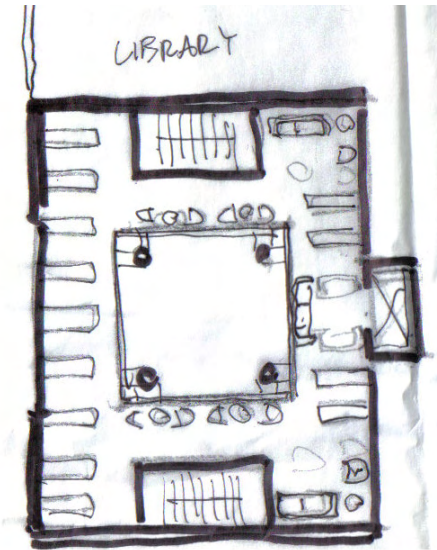


Early section through education building. Shows central atrium running from the lobby to the roof.

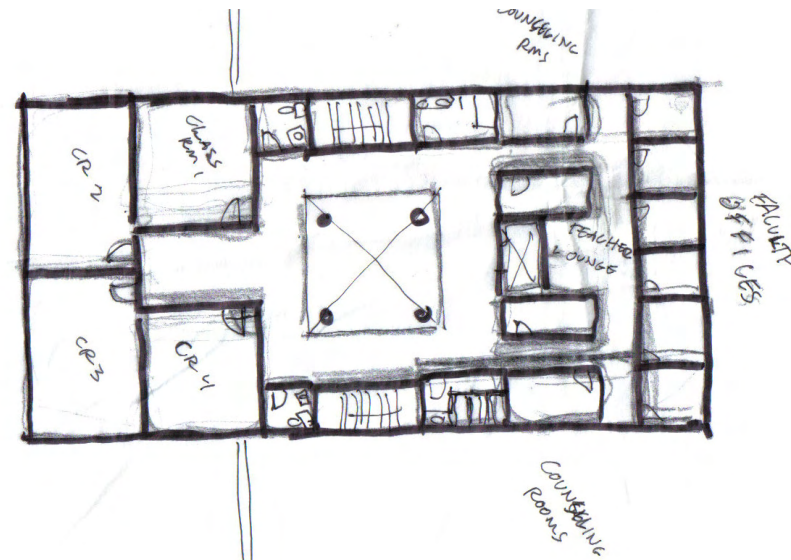


Ground Floor

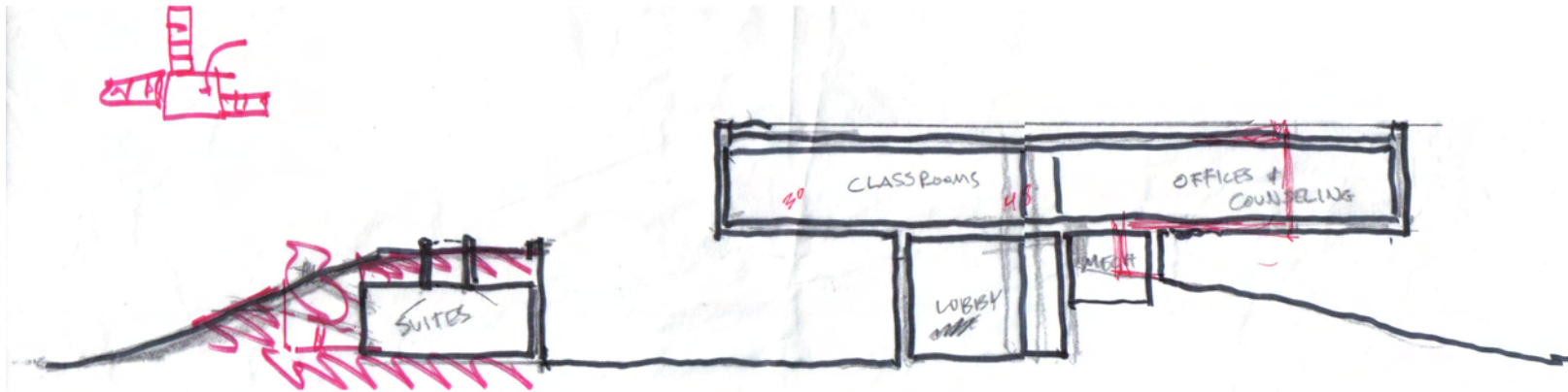
Early plan laying out the program on the site. Exploring the relationship between hospitium and existing monastery buildings



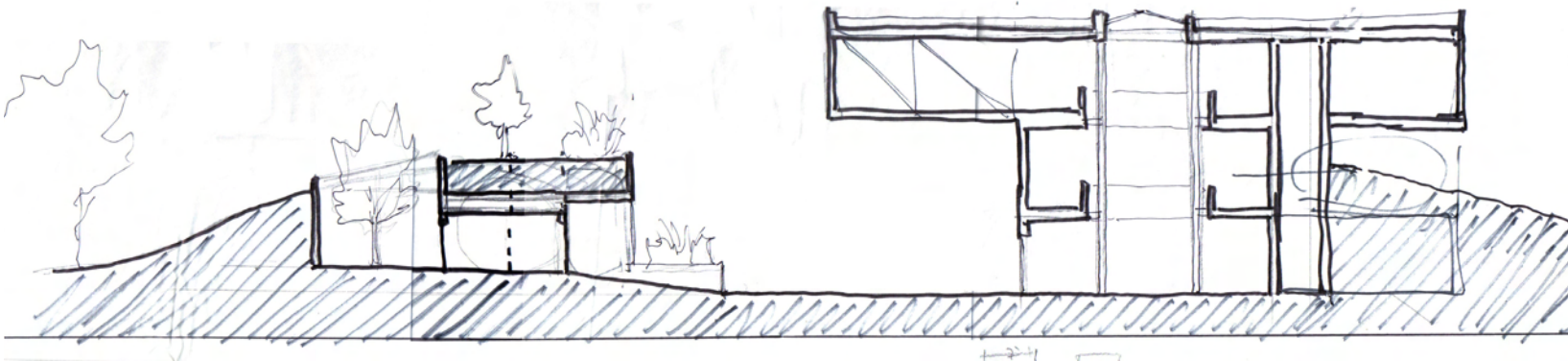
Second Floor - Library



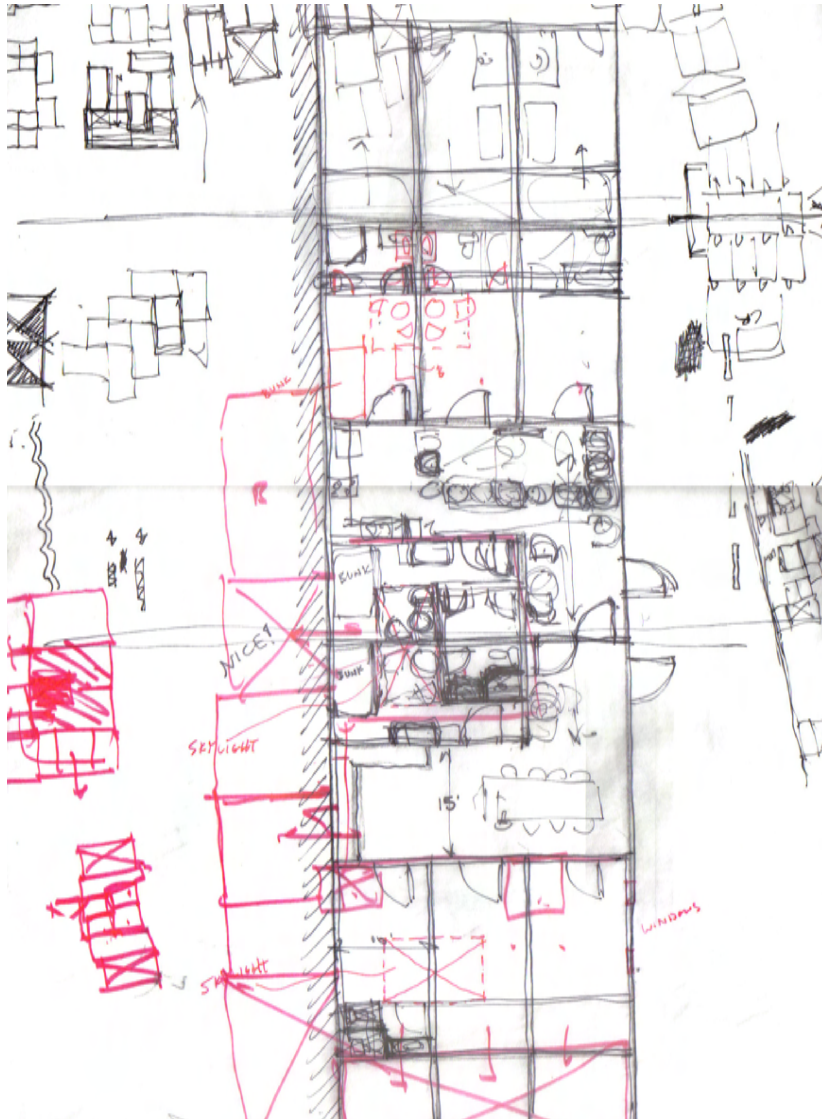
Third Floor - Classrooms and Counseling Center



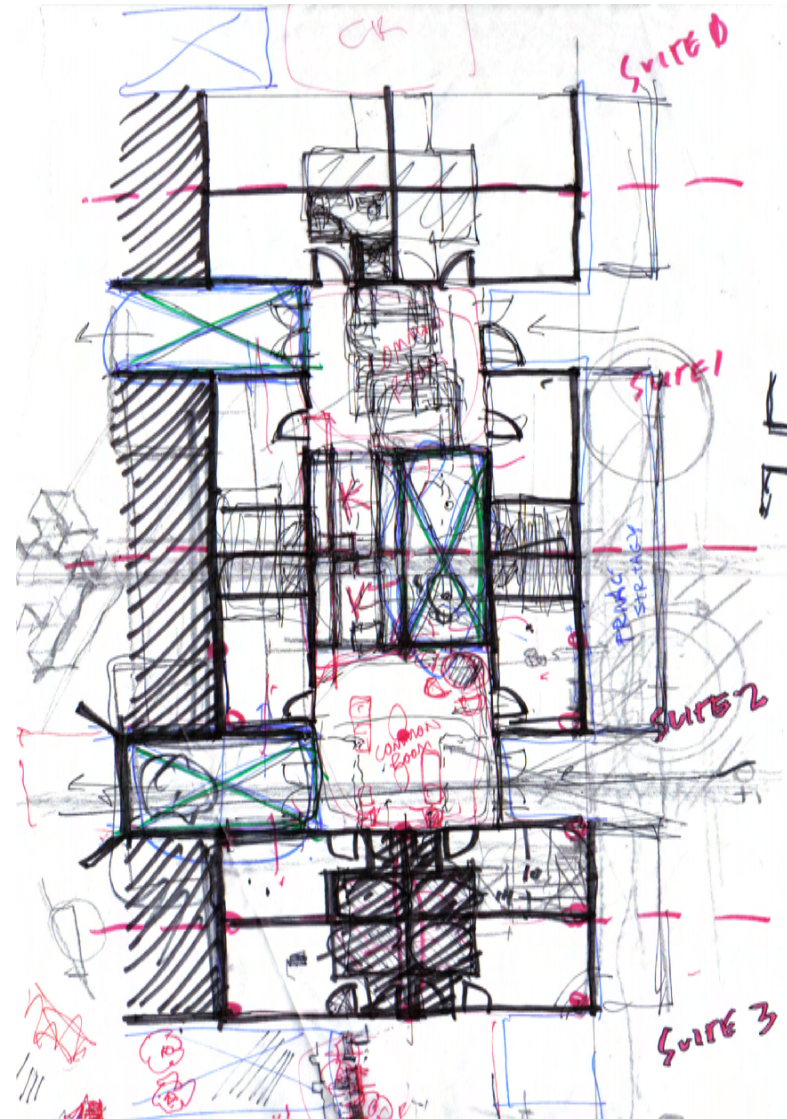
Early section showing relationship between existing hill, exposed foundations and new construction. Exploring possibility of lightwells and courtyards in housing area.



More developed section clearly showing residence courtyard and roof garden. Beginning to think about structure and how hill meets cantilevered space.



Early sketches exploring suite layout

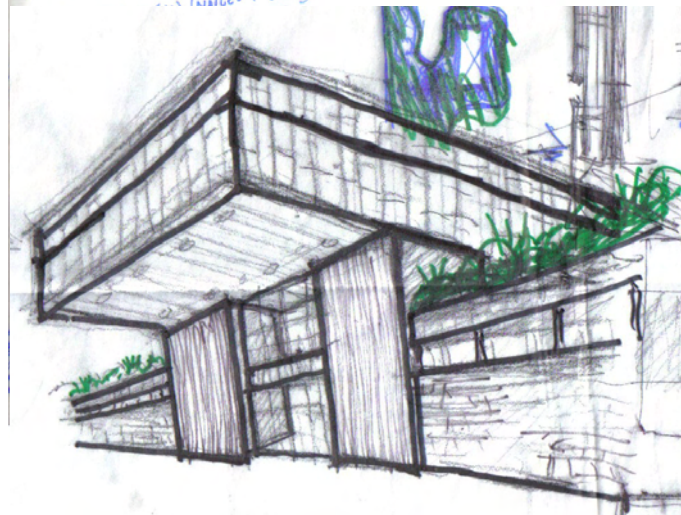


Working with importance of courtyards for light and fresh air

Exploration in elevation, how old foundation meets new construction



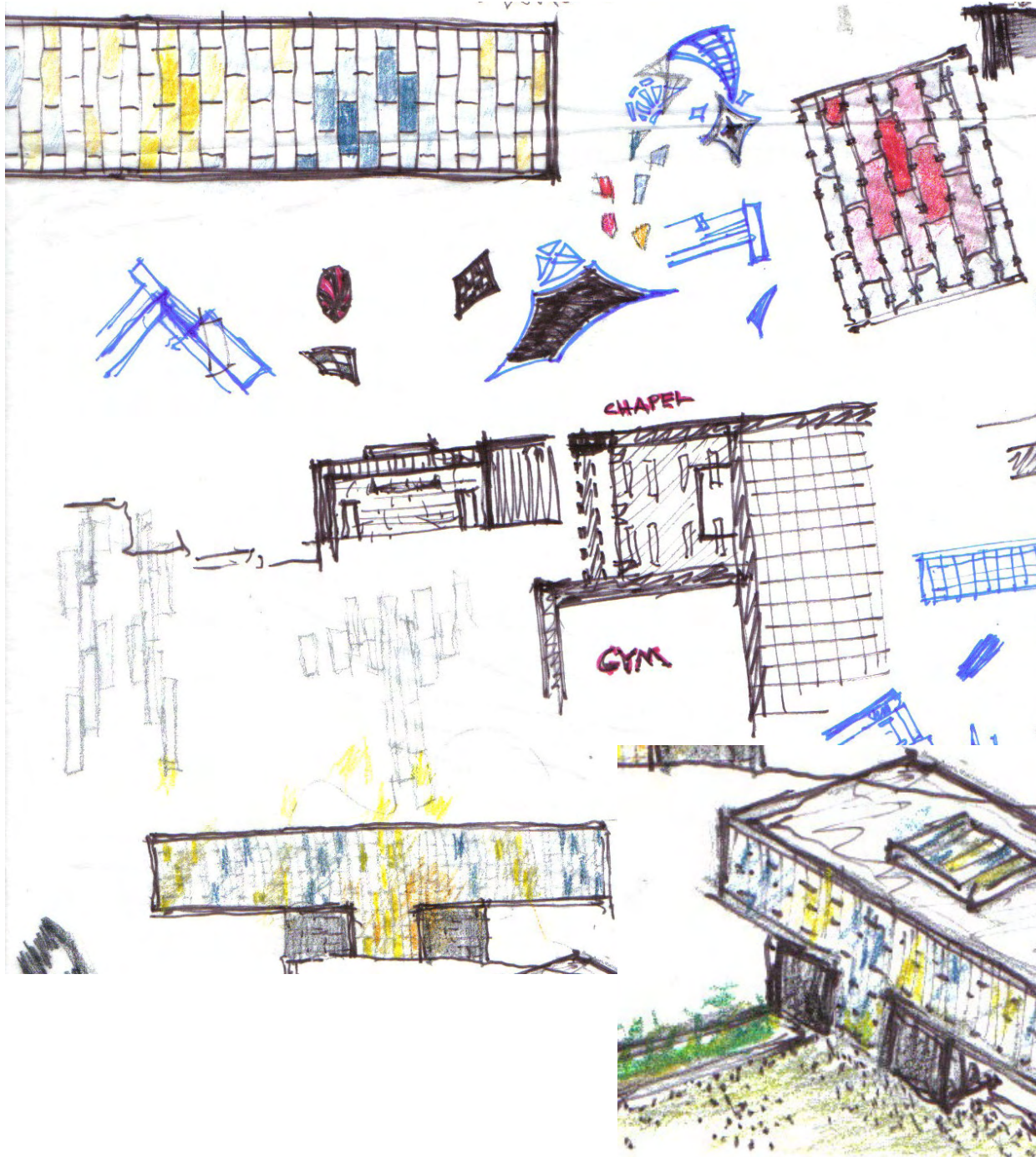
SYMBOL OF RENOVILATION
... (added to 100%)



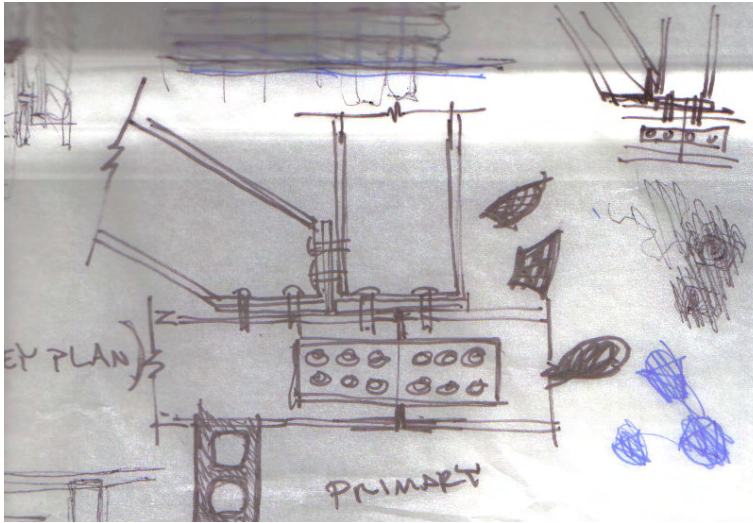
Perspective from central courtyard looking towards underneath of cantilevered



Detailed sections examining materiality and construction details

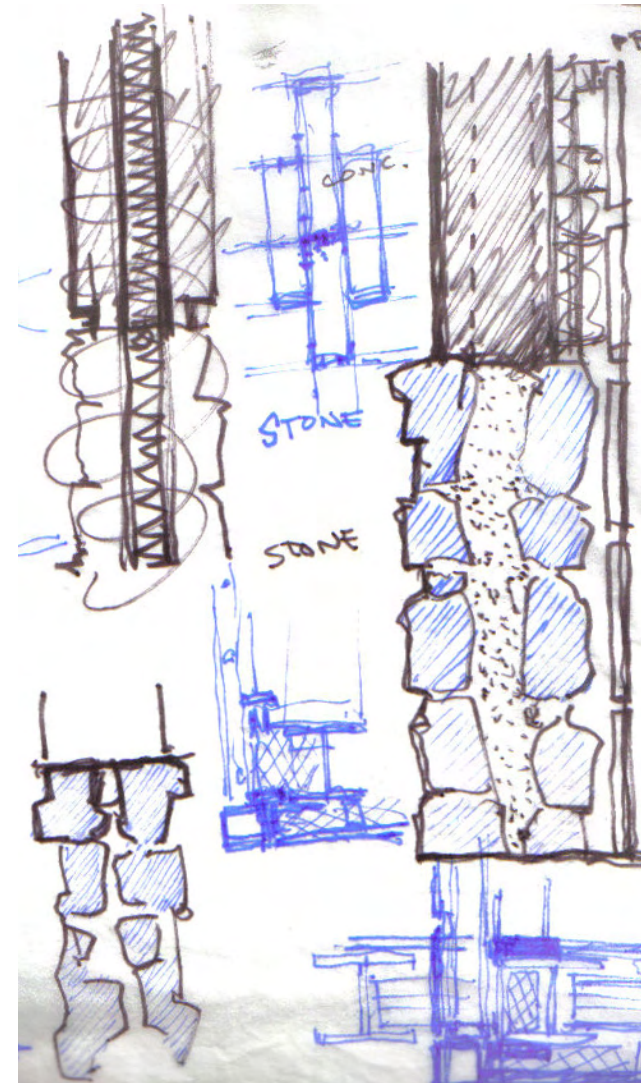
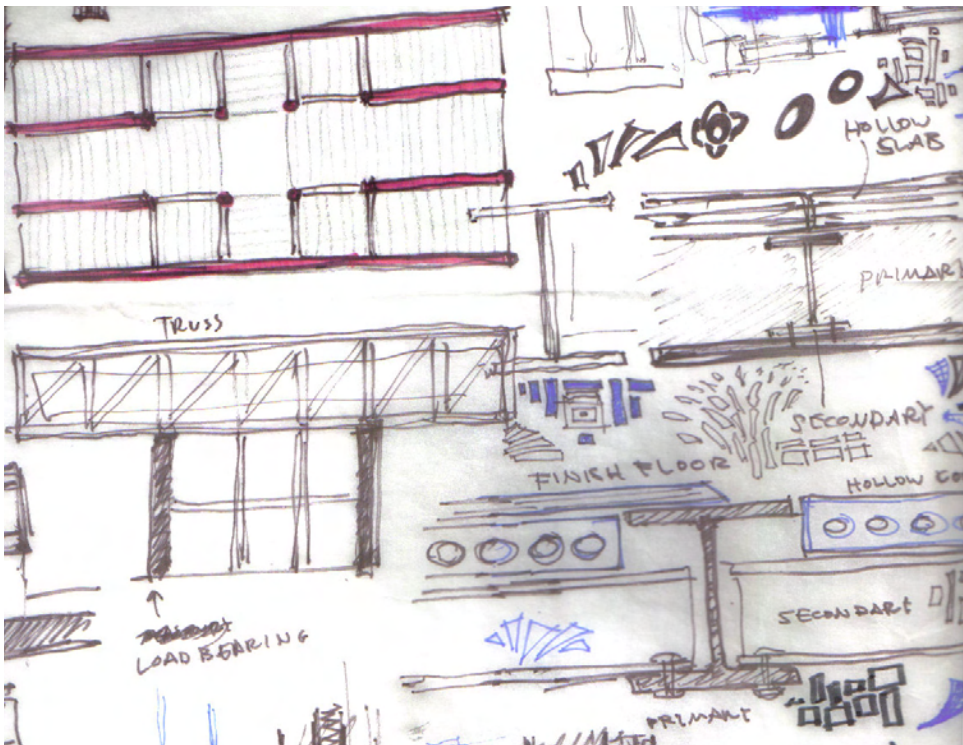


Sketches
developing
facade system
of colored glass
screen with
rough exposed
concrete.



Exploring structure details in cantilevered space

Development of floor system



Potential wall section

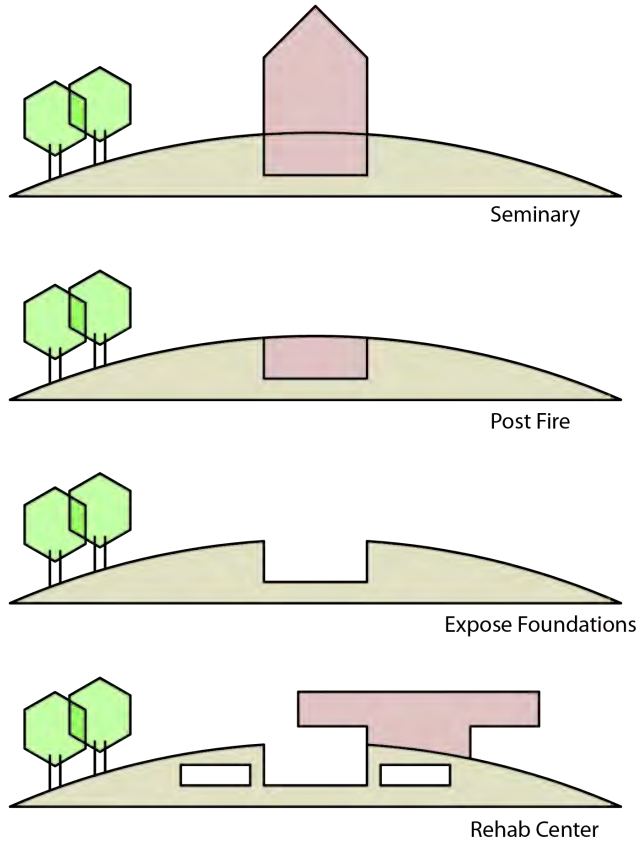
FINAL PROJECT

76

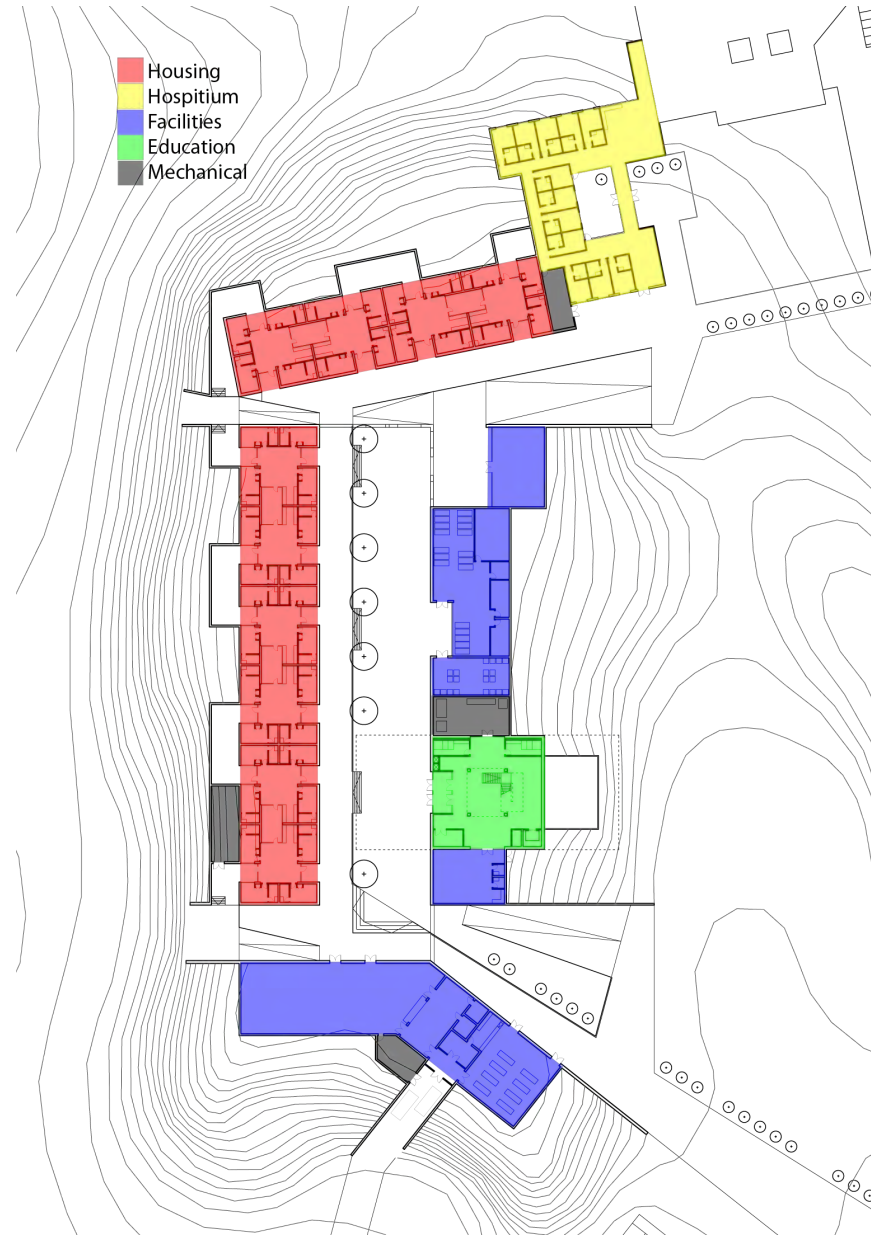


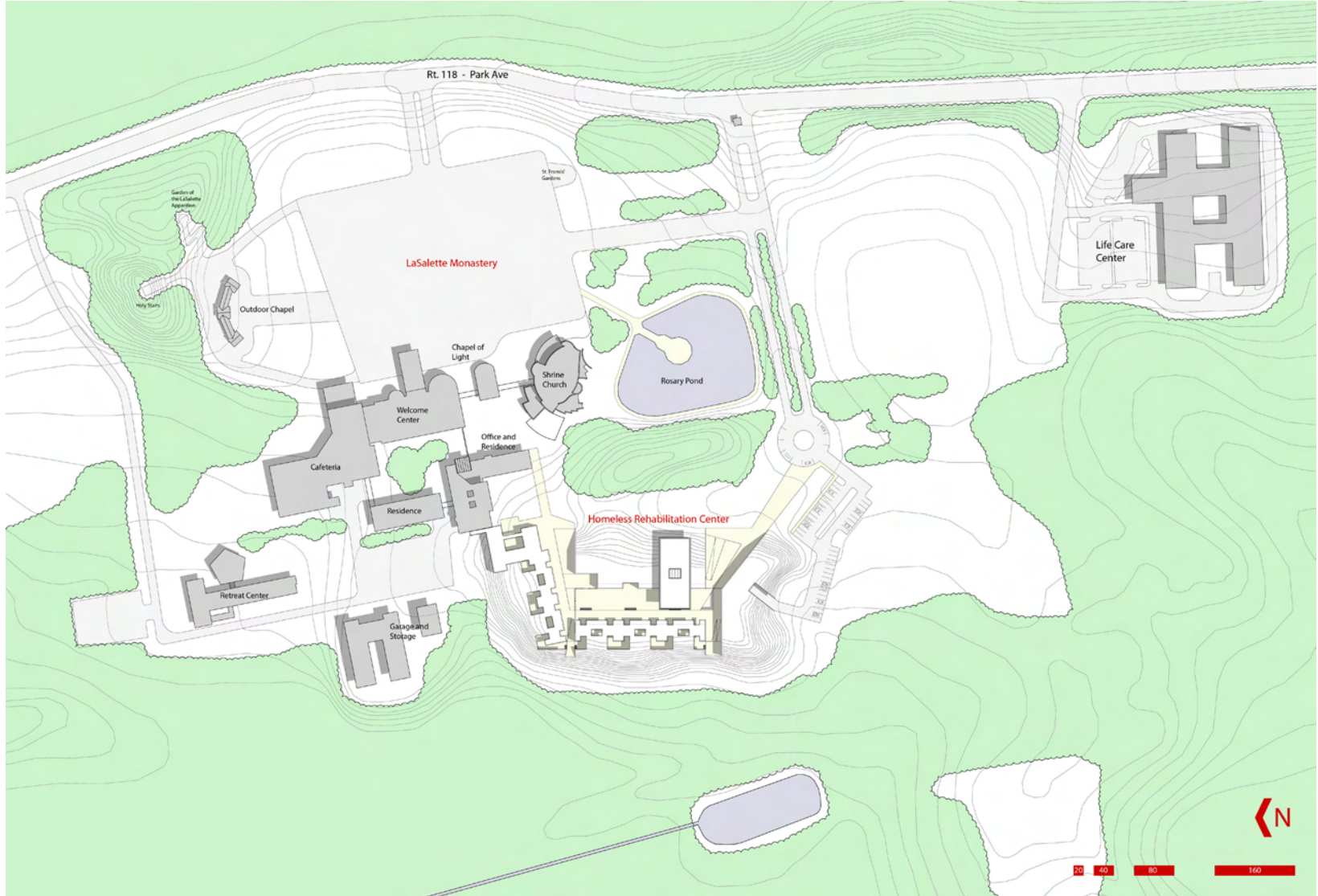


Aerial perspective of building in site at LaSalette



Conceptual Diagram





Site Plan



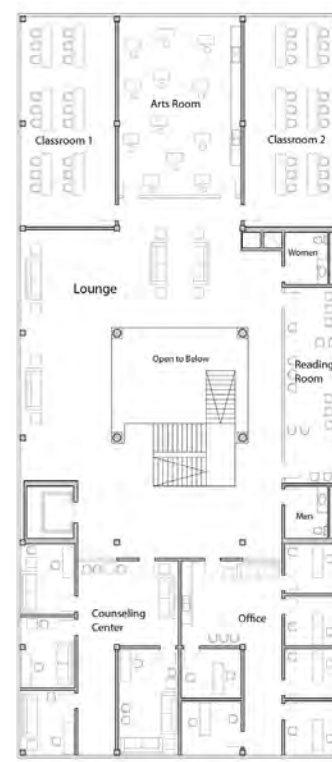
Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

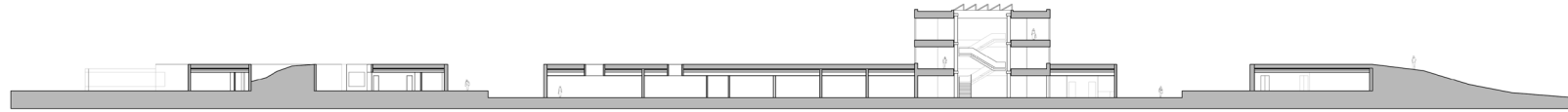


Third Floor Plan



Typical Suite





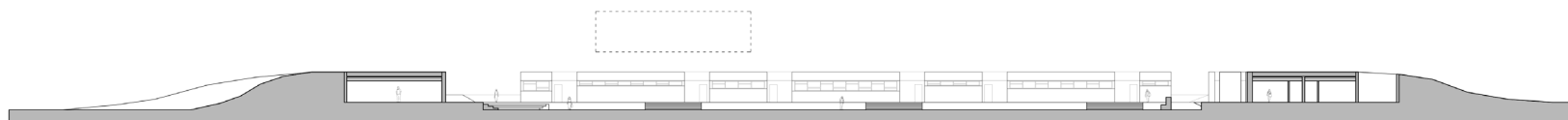
Elevation 1



Elevation 2



Elevation 3

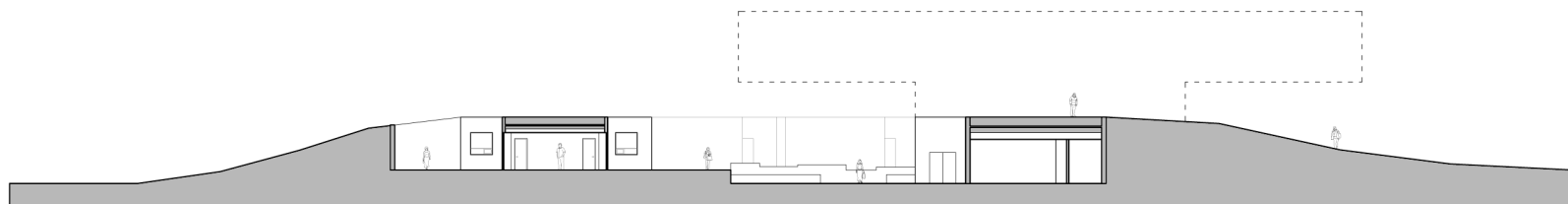


Elevation 4

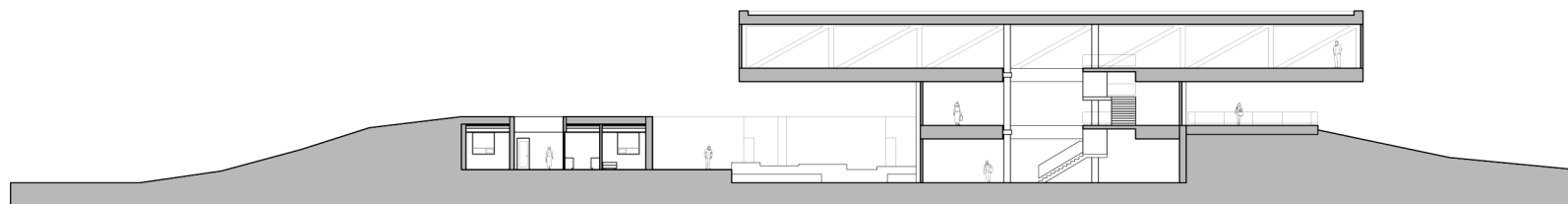
Not to Scale



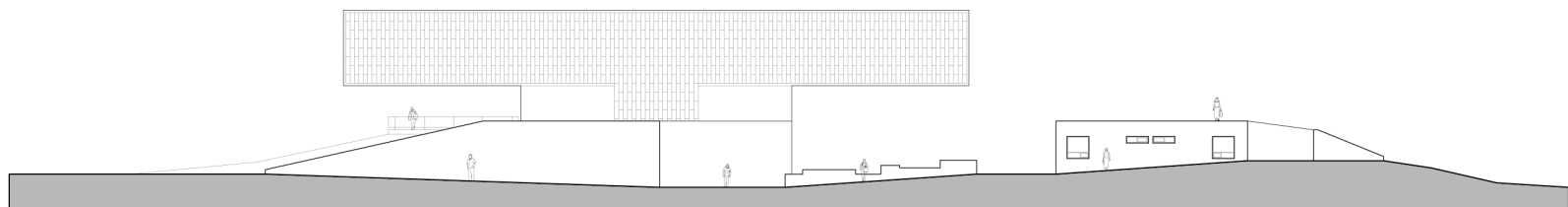
Elevation A



Elevation B



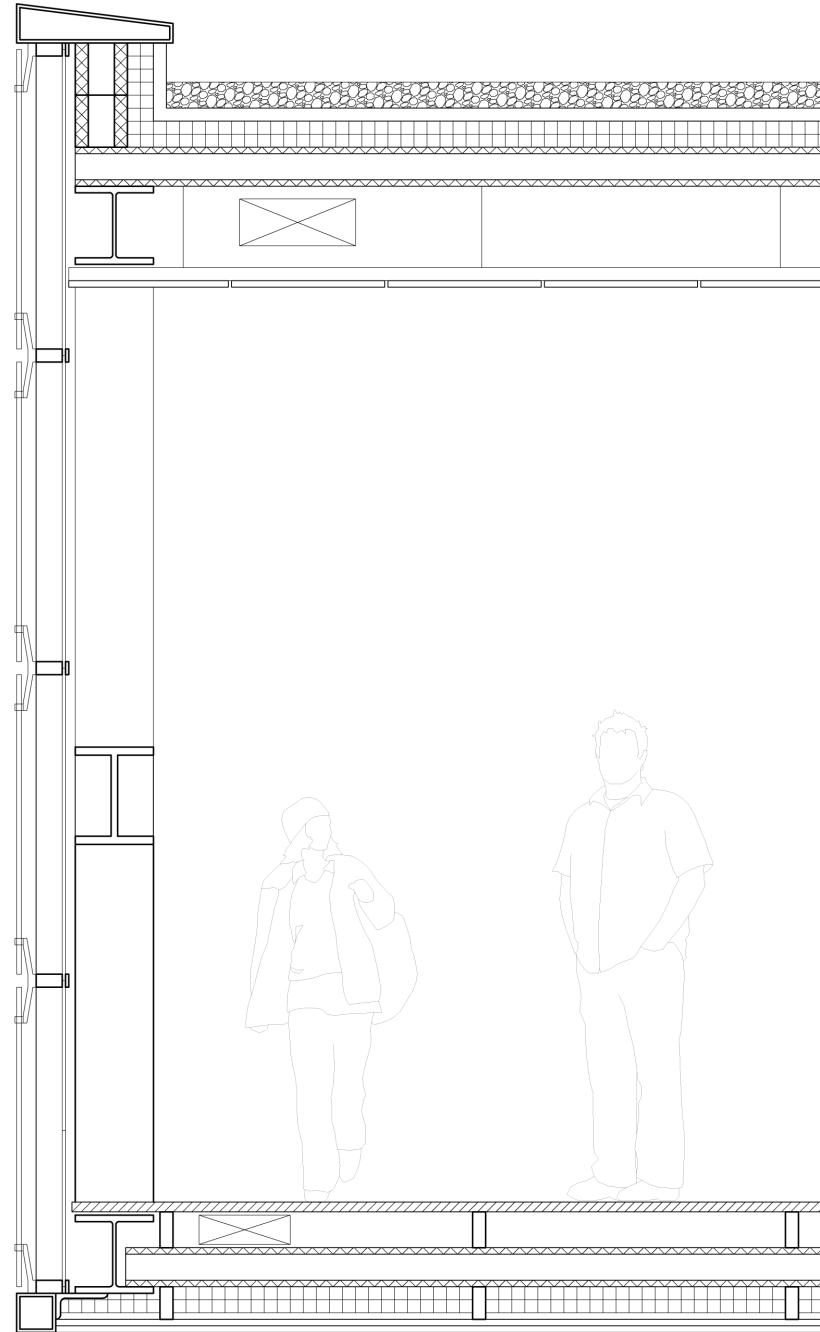
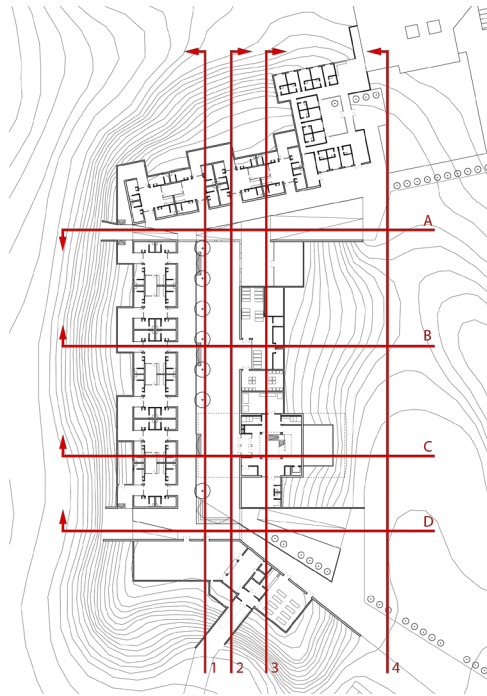
Elevation C



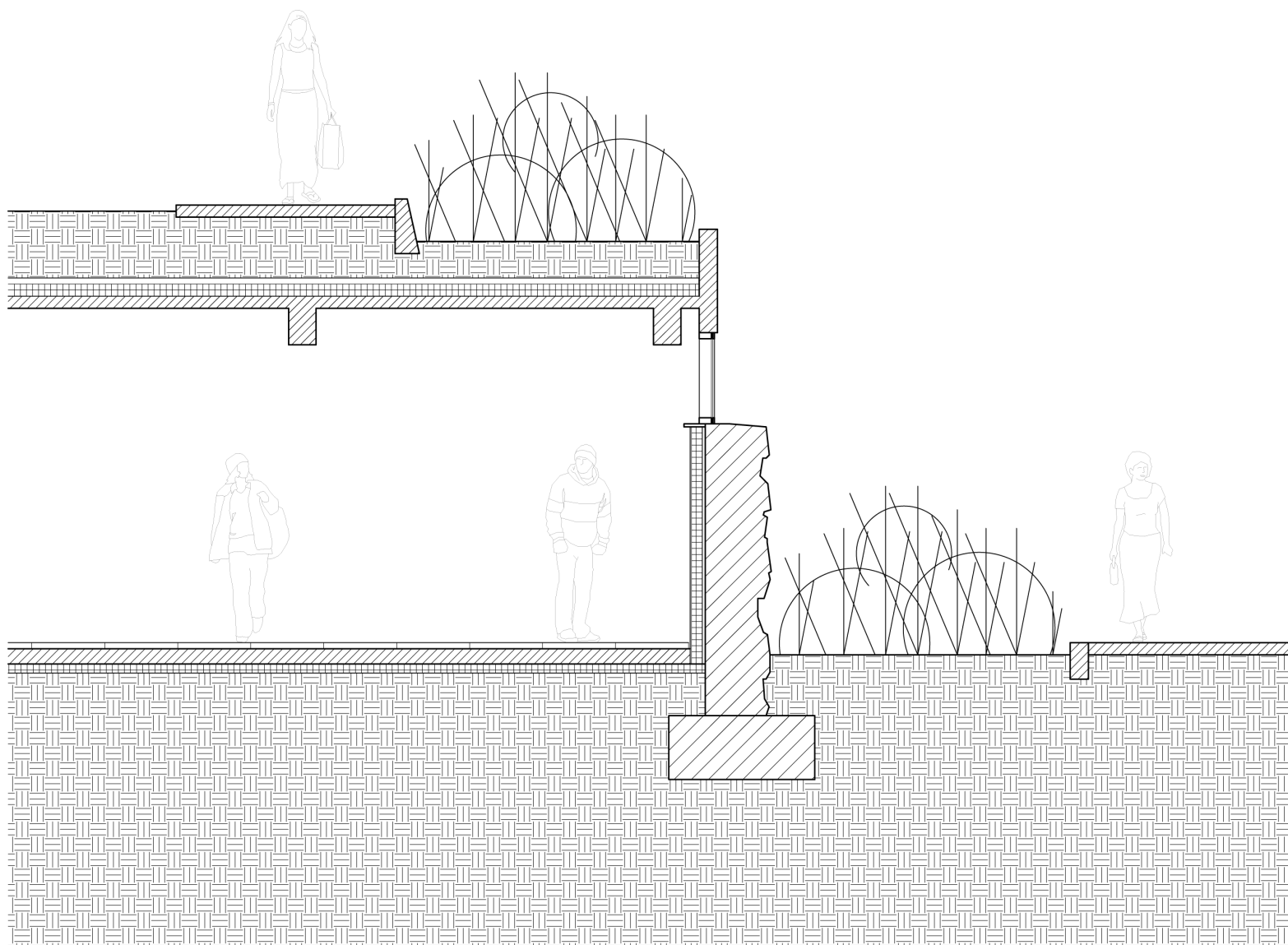
Elevation D

Not to Scale

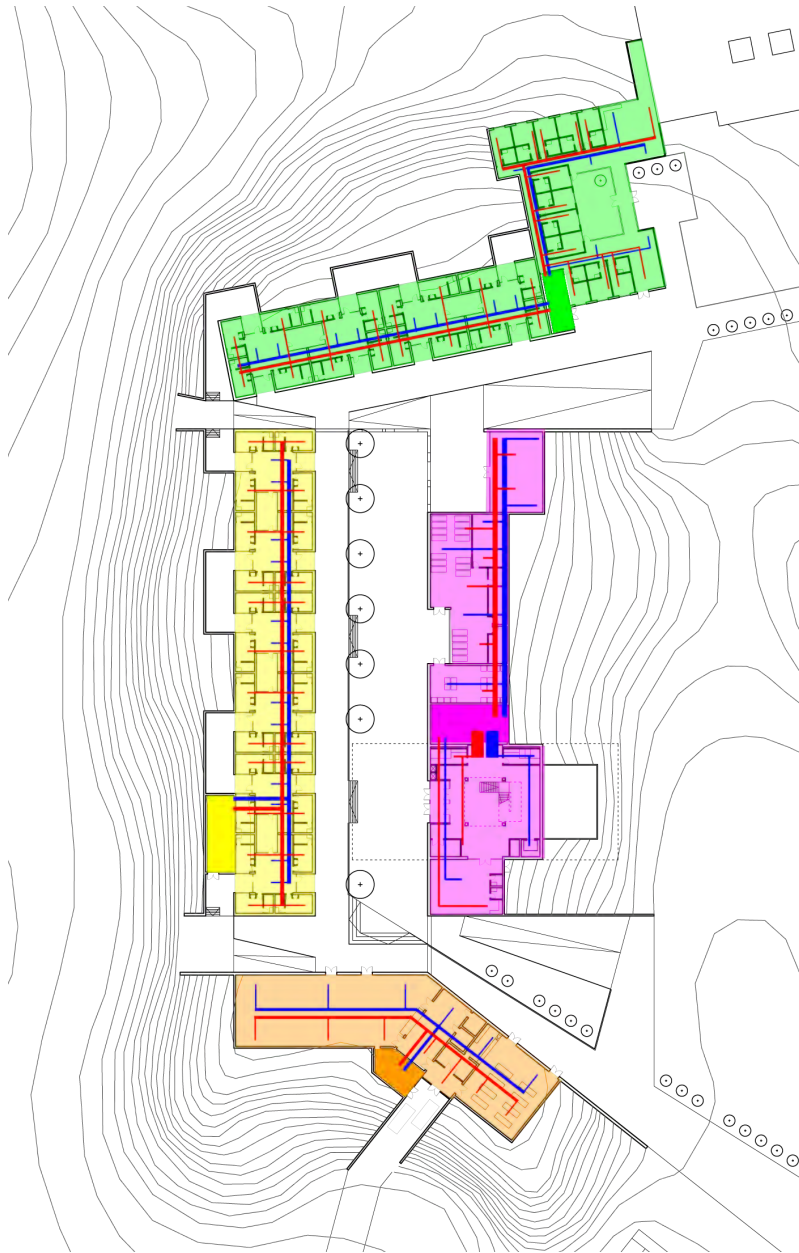
Key Plan



Wall Section at Third Floor Classroom



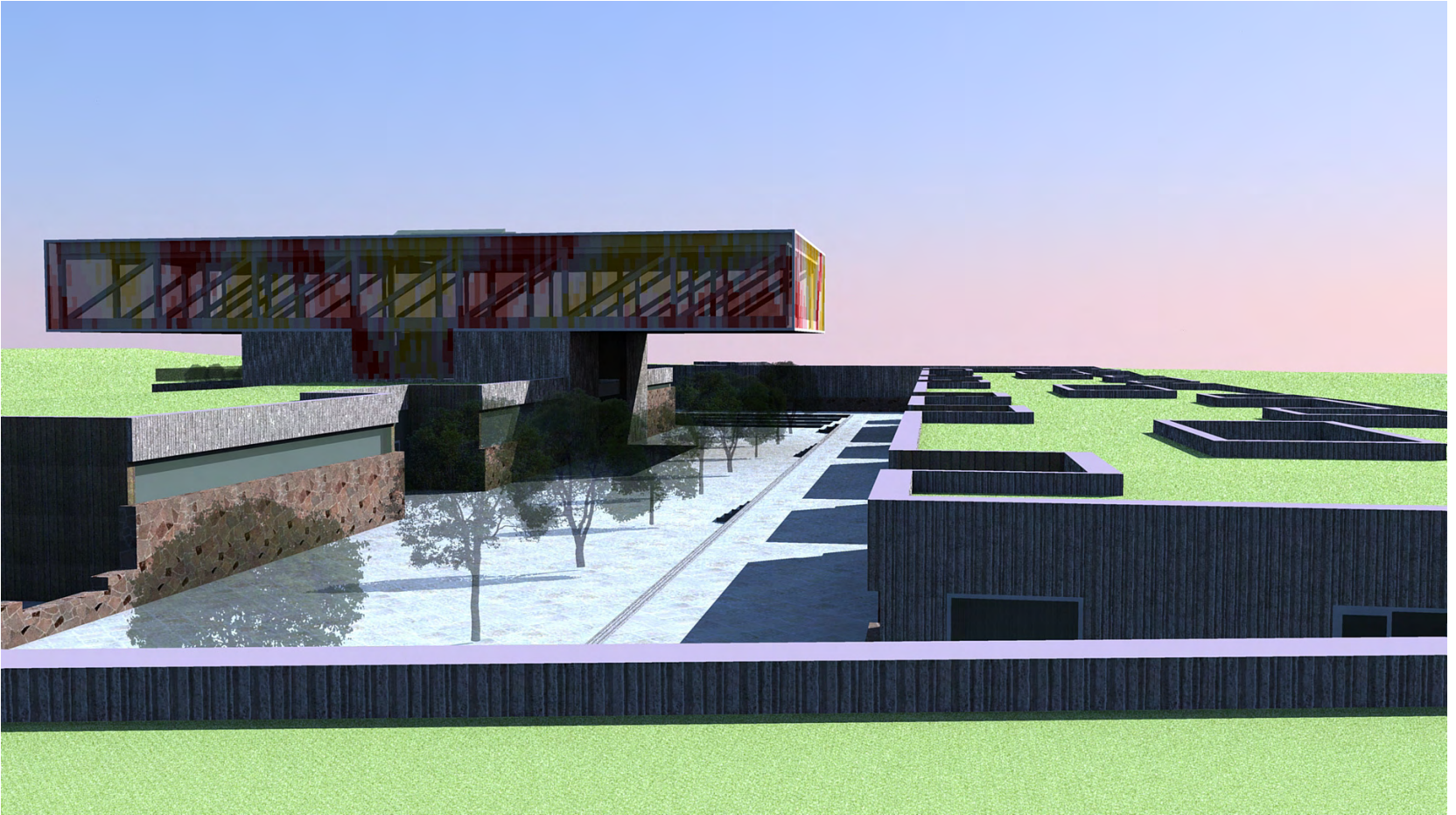
Wall Section at Resident Housing



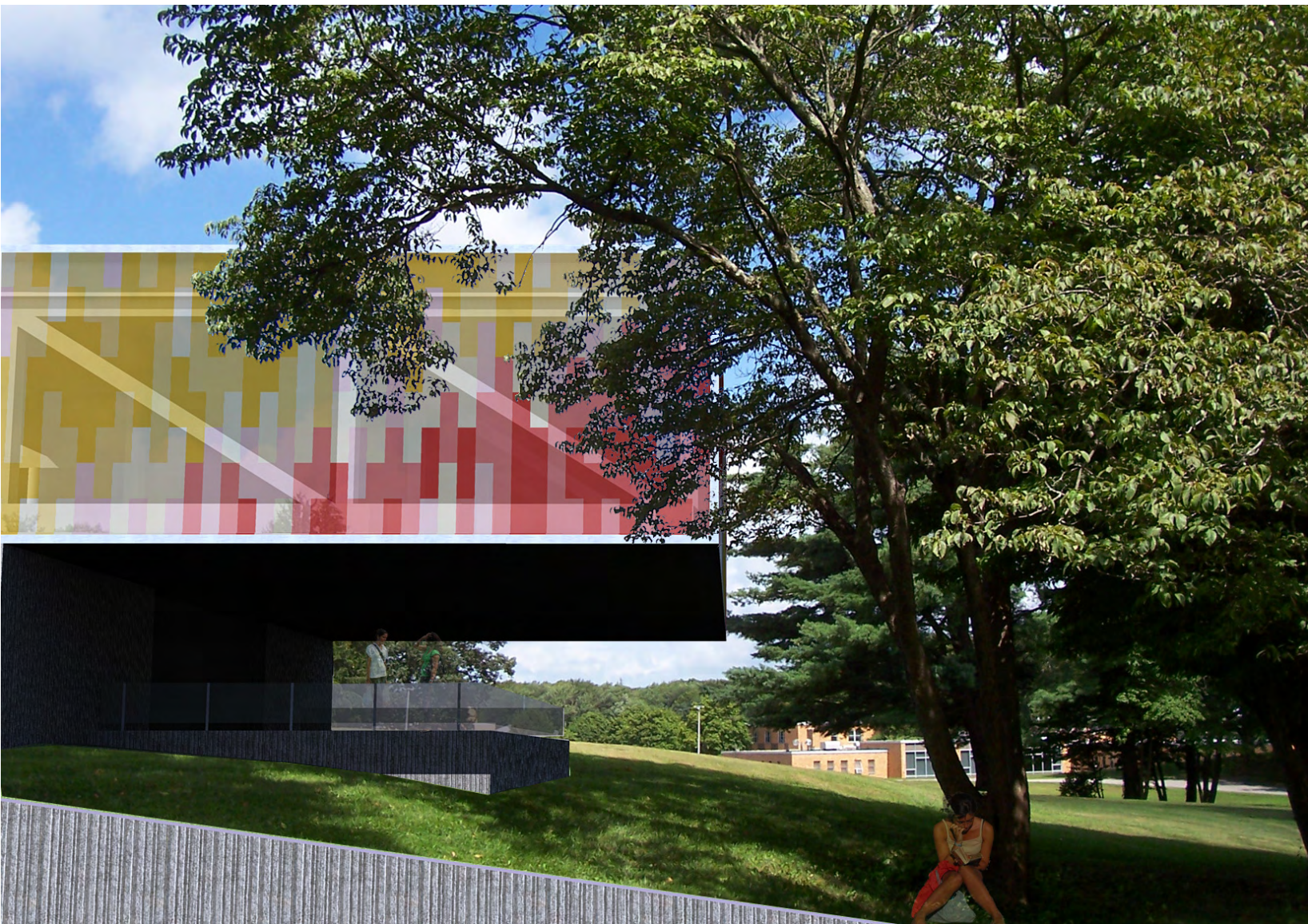
Mechanical Diagram

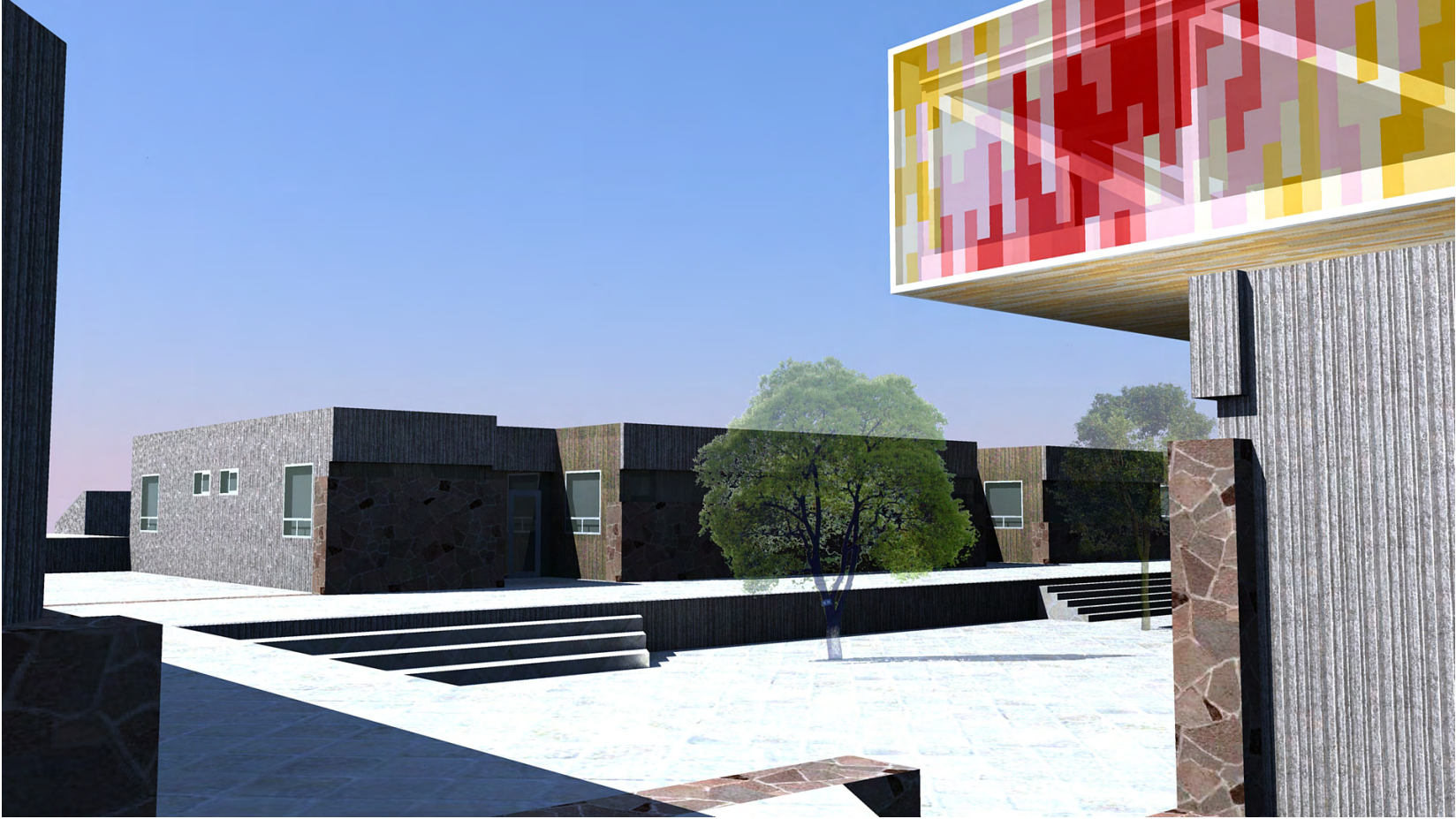


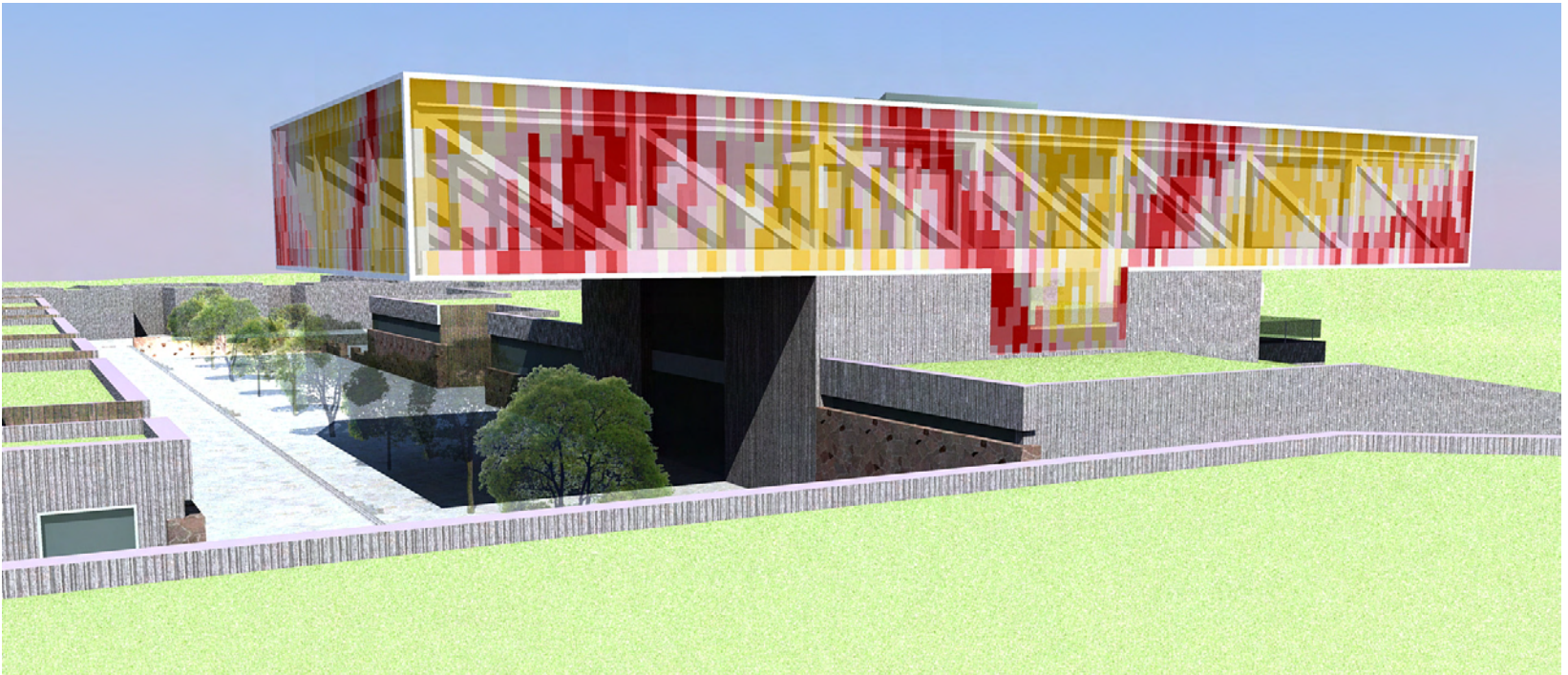
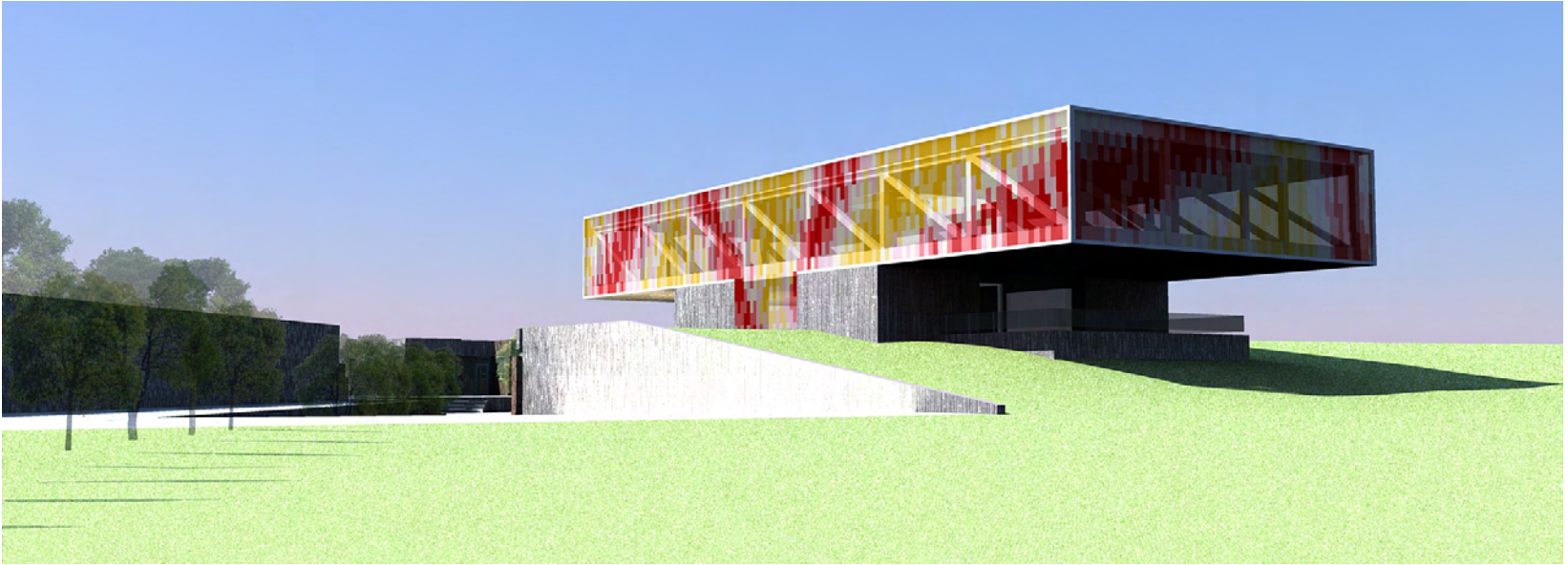
Structural Diagram











Baltanas, Jose. 2006. *Walking Through le Corbusier*. New York, NY. Thames and Hudson Inc.

Bonneville, Victor and Sollitto, Paula T. 1999. *Images of America: Attleboro*. Charleston, SC. Arcadia Printing.

Davis, Paul. 2009. *East Providence tent city residents to leave by Sept. 8*. Providence Journal. August 15.

Delicado, Gonzalo. 2008. *Environmental Park, Santomera*. A10. January/February.

Eggens, Nina. 2008. *Center for Contemporary Arts, Aberdeen*. A10. May/June.

Hanna, William F. 1994. *A Bit of Nostalgia, Attleboro Area in Photographs*. Attleboro, MA. Attleboro Industrial Museum.

Ivy, Robert. 2008. *EWHA Womans University*. Architectural Record. October.

Mays, Vernon. 2008. *Home to A Thousand Souls*. Architect. March.

McKinney, Micheal P. 2009. *Cumberland parcel offered to tent-city homeless is a Superfund site*. Providence Journal. August 22

Stephens, Suzanne. 2007. *Janelia Farm Research Campus*. Architectural Record. March.

Tedesco, Paul H. 1979. *1894 Attleborough Attleboro 1978*. Danvers, MA. Bradford-Bigelow, Inc.

Zeidler, Cordula. 2008. *Treetop Walkway, Kew Gardens*. A10. September/October.

